

THE BIBLE: ITS LETTER AND SPIRIT

BY

WILLIAM C. DICK, M.A., F.E.I.S.

EMERITUS HEADMASTER, GLASGOW EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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TO
ALL LOVERS OF THE BIBLE
ESPECIALLY THOSE PRIVILEGED TO
INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE GREATEST
BOOK IN THE WORLD

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THE TYPOGRAPHY AND BINDING
OF THIS BOOK CONFORM TO THE
AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

PREFACE

THE Divine Authorship of the Word is the fundamental principle underlying the view of the Bible that is herein presented, and the main purpose is to show :

1. The Rationality of a Spiritual Sense in the Word,
2. And that the essence of the Inspiration of the Word is the presence of a Spiritual Sense within the Letter.

The reader should bear in mind this main purpose when incidents in the Word are being treated from a spiritual point of view. Such explanation as is given is not intended to do more than suggest the profound depths of religious philosophy that may be essayed by the student of spiritual exposition ; or the Divine, personal and historical applications of spiritual truth by homiletical exegesis that is the special province of the preacher. It will be enough if the ordinary reader of the Bible is led to a fuller appreciation of the Letter for the sake of that inner Word which is the unfailing guide to spiritual wisdom and the good of life.

The illusion of reality is the first reaction in the child mind to the fable, parable, vision, miracle and history in the Scripture narrative. This generally gives place to the adult's simple faith in the literal inerrancy of the Bible. With the advance of knowledge and the development of reason both illusion and faith begin to waver. The natural progression is then to doubt, disillusion, and finally to denial of the Divine authority of Scripture.

The inescapable problem which faces Church and school is how to avert this downward progression. The problem is neither denominational nor sectarian. It is simply Christian, and the answer must be universally Christian. The nature of the answer is involved in the child's definition of a parable—“ An earthly story with a heavenly meaning.”

The whole of the Word is parabolic ; and its real import is its heavenly or spiritual meaning. The problem of the

Bible is solved for both preacher and teacher in the degree, superficial or profound, that its spiritual content is apprehended.

Biblical Criticism may be regarded as helpful in so far as it maintains the integrity of the Canonical Word, and appreciates a difference in the Books of the Bible with regard to Inspiration.

. It should be noted however that this appreciation of difference felt by Modern Biblical Criticism is subjective, and real only to the individual. It therefore fails to mark an intellectual difference between the Bible and the Word that can be expressed objectively—the Bible proper consisting of those Books that are inspired naturally, and the Word consisting of those Books that are inspired spiritually.

The first two chapters are termed introductory. Chapter i. describes how man was created not only a human being with natural faculties for a life in the natural world, but also a spiritual being with spiritual faculties for the appreciation of spiritual truth. Spiritual truth is truth about the spiritual life, and is on a higher plane than natural truth, natural philosophy and natural religion, which are based upon a knowledge of the material world.

Chapter ii. describes how the spiritual truth apprehended by our earliest forefathers gradually assumed a concrete form, first of speech, then of writing, and lastly of printing. That truth remains as an inner content, possible of attainment when man knows how to break through the outer covering of worldly speech in which it is enveloped.

Chapters iii-vi describe in outline how we got our Bible, and the form it has ultimately assumed; and Chapters vii-xxii indicate, on an episodic rather than on a continuous method, the spiritual nature of the Word, and how its spiritual content may be attained.

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THE BIBLE: ITS LETTER AND SPIRIT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

1. JEWISH CHRONOLOGY. Appendix I. Rise and Fall of Civilizations.
2. EVOLUTION:¹ MAN THE PURPOSE OF CREATION.
 - (1) The Popular Theory of Continuous Evolution.
 - (2) Evolution within Classes, separately Created and Discretely Developed.
 - (3) Spiritual Endowment of Man and Animal Contrasted.
 - (4) Sex Difference.
 - (5) Significance of Embryonic Traces, Sports and Variations.
 - (6) Classification of Animal Kingdom; and Eternally Moving Cycle of Love, Outgoing and Returning to Itself.

I. JEWISH CHRONOLOGY

IT is remarkable how the religious element in Western civilization has clung to belief in Jewish chronology. Assigning the Creation to a period of six days some 4004 years B.C.² this chronology has long accustomed people to regard time as limited to thousands of years. Science, however, from its knowledge of the earth and the material universe, has expanded these few thousands of years to millions and multiples of millions. Far from attempting to assign a date for the first creative act, Science now regards Creation as a continuous progressive activity of indeterminate initiation, and suggests that the earth had so far advanced in development towards its present form that it provided a suitable environment to support life hundreds of millions of years ago.

¹ "Evolution : Man the Purpose of Creation," appeared in the *New Church Magazine*, Oct.-Dec. 1939.

² See Appendix I. p. 9.

2. EVOLUTION : MAN THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

First was the fixation of the mineral kingdom from the gaseous form in which the material substance of the earth originally took shape from its spiritual source : then the arrangement of land and water ; and then the appearance of vegetable and animal life as the position of the earth became stabilized in relation to the sun. When that was done the scene was set millions of years ago for the appearance of man. Since then, while man's external affairs have been guided by all forms of government from theocracy to democracy, there has been operating in the hearts of men, felt or unfelt, recognized or unrecognized, the Word of the eternal God, the Creator of all.

(i) *The Popular Theory of Continuous Evolution*

What has contributed more than anything else in modern times to a denial of a Divine Creator is the popular theory of Evolution, and yet no theory was ever less warranted by the facts upon which it is based. Take the stage in creation where the animal kingdom begins. This presents no difficulty to the evolutionist. Organic life, Haeckel says, is itself a chemico-physical process, and the element which best induces this process is carbon, so that

"The peculiar chemico-physical properties of the compounds of carbon are the sole and the mechanical causes of the specific phenomena of movement which distinguish organic from inorganic substances and which are called life."—*Riddle of the Universe*, p. 91.

Having thus evolved life by abiogenesis or spontaneous generation, by the chemical interaction of the elements, evolutionists describe its first appearance in an organism of one cell. That is enough : the course is clear—more

or less—from that one cell through the various orders into which Haeckel divides the Animal Kingdom to man.

The case for Evolution as thus understood is strongly stated by Vivian Phelps in *The Churches and Modern Thought*, in which is presented an array of evidence that is well-nigh convincing : but it fails to convince, as is bound to fail every attempt to establish a theory based on an unscientific foundation such as Haeckel conjectures. Moreover, if it is urged that life is not spontaneously produced by a chemical process, but is an added quality, the possibility of a Creator is not eliminated, and the possibility of higher forms of life than man appearing, being created as was the earliest form, must apparently be granted.

Although the world of thought appears to be dominated by the ideas of Victorian science, it is possible to attain a rational view of Creation that is evolutionary—but only within species and orders. The popular theory of Evolution, the simple process of creation from the lowest protozoa to man endowed not only with mental but also with spiritual faculties, rests upon one hypothesis namely, that the higher organism is developed from the lower. Of this the evolutionist has no proof to offer. He cannot bridge the gaps that separate the stages in the evolutionary process. He cannot suggest the particular means by which the gaps were bridged, nor how nature was impelled to choose the opportune moment for a variation from the lower species to emerge, not merely to improve its own species but to begin a totally distinct species of a higher order. He takes for granted the passage from the lower to the higher, and relies for support on scientific facts of various kinds, of which two may be instanced. First, embryology shows that in its pre-natal growth the embryo of man exhibits the features of the lower animals, and for a period cannot be distinguished from them ; and this fact, Haeckel affirms, can only be elucidated by

assuming a common parentage (*Riddle of the Universe*, p. 23) ; and second, the work of Darwin in explaining the methods of nature in perfecting the various species of animals appears to support the theory of Evolution ; since, according to his theory of natural selection, the animals in their classes are ever striving towards a better and higher expression.

(2) *Evolution within Classes, separately Created and Discretely Developed*

However, the facts of embryology and natural selection can be seen to support a very different theory of Evolution, if the subject is viewed from a different standpoint. A new theory propounded by Thomas Child in *Root Principles* (Allenson) postulates that each class originated from a single cell ; that these classes were not produced by development from the lower, but that each class sprang directly from the single cell and therefore passed, within itself in embryo, through all the formations of the class beneath it :

“ When the Protozoa were formed from the cell, they remained Protozoa, and were not developed into Metazoa ; when the Metazoa were formed, they were, like the Protozoa, produced from the single cell, and, within themselves, passed through the Protozoa stage, and so developed into Metazoa ; but when developed, were left to propagate their kind on their own plane, as were the Protozoa before them. So with the Invertebrates and the Vertebrates—passing within themselves through the whole course from the single cell upwards, and taking on their passage each form in succession till their own stage, on which they remained, was reached. Thus it was with the Anthropoid Apes ; so also with man.”—*Root Principles*, p. 79.

Development can only be within the limits of the developing form, otherwise there would be no separate identity of classes, but only one continuous form. Continuity of form, however, is contrary to the facts of science, which group organisms into distinct classes with fundamental differences, and these do not show continuous development, notwithstanding the special pleading of evolutionists for links or intermediaries which do not appear.

While it is true that each order of creation, or each succession of species within each other, does not develop by the ordinary means of production or generation from the next lower it does not follow that each order owes nothing to what has preceded it. On the contrary each order acts as the physical framework or skeleton upon which the higher is built. When the ground was sufficiently prepared to sustain a higher order or species a new influx of spiritual substance with higher spiritual qualities took place into the appropriate receptive matrix of the highest existing species or order. Thus there was produced a new species or order, in outward appearance a stage more advanced towards the human form to which all creation was tending, correspondingly to the higher spiritual content which was super-added from the spiritual world.

When each new order arose to complete the series to man, the natural process of reproduction and development within itself proceeded on the principle of the single cell theory. As the purpose of natural creation has been attained in the appearance of man, each individual formed by ordinary means of production in every species and order passes through in embryonic development all the stages of the preceding orders and emerges into its own distinctive life in the world, to develop, as far as it may, in its own species or order, but incapable of evolving to a higher, and lacking in

itself the power of ever producing a higher species or order.

(3) *Spiritual Endowment of Man and Animal Contrasted*

How much higher the plane of human life is than that of the animal may be realized by contrasting the mental and spiritual potentialities of the animal with those of man. The mental endowments of the animal are all associated with the life of nature—the life of the body, and they are not capable of higher development. These endowments include : 1. Sense impressions ; 2. Memory with powers of mimicry ; 3. Knowledge connected with the loves, desires and wants of the animal ; 4. Intelligence similarly connected ; 5. The faculty of inarticulate speech ; and 6. The instinct to appreciate and reciprocate affection and hate, to preserve self and offspring, and to propagate its kind. On the other hand the mind of man includes : 1. Sense impressions ; 2. Memory ; 3. Knowledge not restricted ; 4. Intelligence not restricted ; 5. The faculty of articulate speech, arising from the power to think from a higher to a lower thought, and to vocal expression ; 6. Rationality in love, intelligence and deed ; 7. Judgment ; 8. Freedom ; 9. Responsibility ; 10. Conscience ; 11. The faculty to frame and obey civil and moral law ; and 12. The sense of religion and the idea of God.

(4) *Sex Difference*

As man was created in the image and likeness of God, and as God is Essential Love and Wisdom with the Operative Energy that gives ultimate expression to these, namely the Holy Spirit pervading and maintaining all creation, so the spiritual nature of man consists of the two faculties, the will and the understanding, by which his powers of action are regulated. The will is the faculty of love, comprising the affections, desires, motives,

and the understanding is the faculty of wisdom, intelligence and knowledge. These complementary faculties, existing together in every human being, are respectively the female and the male in human nature, the will predominating in woman and the understanding in man. To this predominance of the will in woman and the understanding in man is to be attributed the fundamental differences in the sexes.

(5) *Significance of Embryonic Traces,
Sports and Variations*

The facts of science themselves guarantee the validity of the theory that the orders of the animal kingdom were created from a succession of single cells, the higher containing within themselves all the potentialities of the lower, passing through in succession in the course of embryonic development all the stages of the lower until fruition is reached, when a new and higher order emerges. Thus embryonic traces of lower orders are fully accounted for.

The facts upon which the theory of natural selection is based are also accepted as true, and they also substantiate this theory ; but these facts have new light shed upon them. Sports and variations are not to be regarded as efforts towards the creation of new orders, but as efforts towards the expression of the highest form of the same order, appearing apparently capriciously by the fortuitous combination of certain circumstances which open up a line of less resistance. The law of natural selection decides in the long run whether the variation is to continue. If it is fit to assist in the development of the order, it survives : if it is unfit, it dies out. The fact of the sterility of hybrids, the most distinctive form of variation, is almost conclusive proof that by no conceivable form of variation could a lower form develop into a higher.

(6) *Classification of Animal Kingdom; and Eternally Moving Cycle of Love, Outgoing and Returning to Itself.*

Dr. Spengler (*The Decline of the West*), Vol. II., p. 32, controverts the popular theory of Evolution, with its shallow and far too narrow "scientifically calculable and indeed mechanical utility-causes," and claims that there is no more conclusive refutation of Darwinism than that furnished by Palaeontology. "What unfolds itself in the plan of Creation in ever increasing richness of form, is the great classes and kinds of living beings which exist aboriginally and exist still, without transition types in the grouping of to-day." He further states that the assumption of utility-causes or other visible causes for these phenomena has no support of actuality. As for mankind, he says, discoveries of the Diluvial Age indicate more and more pointedly that the man-forms existing then correspond to those living now: there is not the slightest trace of evolution towards a race of greater utilitarian fitness.

The following classification shows the eight orders of the animal Kingdom as distinguished by Haeckel, but with man, separated from the Anthropoid Ape, forming the ninth and final order :

1. Unicellular Protozoa.
2. Multicellular Protozoa.
3. Metazoa : Sponges, Corals.
4. Invertebrates : Worms, Molluscs, Insects.
5. Vertebrates : Fish, Frogs.
6. Craniota : Reptiles, Birds.
7. Mammals : Quadrupeds.
8. Anthropoid Apes.
9. Man.

This process, by which Creation has progressed step by step upward by a new influx of greater spiritual content

at each stage from the earliest form in which the spiritual became ultimated in matter till man appeared, ceased when that stage, the crown of Creation, was reached. There was still, however, an event to take place which should employ an analogous process, and complete the great eternally moving cycle of outgoing Love returning to Itself. The Incarnation was the event by which Humanity was assumed, a Humanity which was not merely human like that of other men, but which corresponded to the inflowing Divine, and which was ultimately glorified or made Divine when it became one with the Father.

When man appeared, the crown of all created things, the image and likeness of God, perfect in form and faculty, the circle of Creation was complete. God, from His infinite Love and according to His infinite Wisdom, had created the universe, implanted in it all forms of life, and placed at their head man, a spiritual-natural being, endowed with freedom and rationality, upon whom He might lavish His love and the treasures of His wisdom ; and by whom He might be loved to eternity : for man never dies. After his probationary period of life in this natural world is over, his life continues without end in the spiritual world.

A P P E N D I X I

"Assigning the Creation to a period of six days some 4004 years B.C.," p. i.

Rise and Fall of Civilizations.

Archæologists, not bound by the Hebrew chronology of the Bible, are now disclosing a vista of civilizations extending their lengthening pageant into the dim and distant past. *The Decline of the West*, by O. Spengler, gives an interesting comparative study of the civilizations of ancient and modern

times. The author describes civilization as the inevitable destiny of a culture, the racial or national life of a people.

"Civilizations," he says, "are the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable. They are a conclusion, the thing-become succeeding the thing-becoming, death following life, rigidity following expansion, intellectual age and the stone-built petrifying world-city following mother earth and the spiritual childhood of Doric and Gothic. They are an end, irrevocable, yet by inward necessity reached again and again." Vol. I., p. 31.

They in turn perish in the winter of old age as the result of internal decay, and he notes as the essential features of decline an imposing external appearance, the decay of creative impulses and active spiritual life, and a general ebbing of vitality.

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTORY

1. THE FIRST COMMUNITY.
2. SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION.
3. DOMINATION OF THE INTELLECT.
4. LANGUAGE : WORDLESS TO VERBAL. Appendix II. Language.
5. THE REALIZATION OF THE SPIRITUAL : SPEAKING WITH TONGUES.¹
6. THE NEED FOR A WRITTEN WORD.
7. WRITING INTRODUCED FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORD.

I. THE FIRST COMMUNITY

SOMEWHERE in the heart of the near East was the cradle of the human race. Encircled by the natural barriers of rivers, mountain range and desert, our earliest ancestors attained the perfect life of Eden. God walked with them and they walked with God. Their spiritual, mental and physical faculties developed, their knowledge increased and their powers expanded—all to the single end that they might serve to the utmost of their ability their God and their neighbour. In the course of ages the need for extending their borders became pressing. The natural urge to emigrate arose. The more adventurous with similar tastes, needs or views banded together and set out to seek new homes. North, South, East and West migrations proceeded; and what were predominant personal characteristics in those who were mutually attracted into colonizing groups became through time racial and national features in the kingdoms and empires of ancient times.

2. SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

Behind the Bible, behind the literary remains of the ancient civilizations of Babylon, Chaldea, Canaan,

¹ "The Realization of the Spiritual : Speaking with Tongues," appeared in the *New Church Magazine*, Oct.-Dec. 1938.

Egypt, there was this religious community, with an intimate religious knowledge of the nature of God and an apprehension of His Wisdom which declared to them the Divine Law for living in this world in conformity with spiritual principles. They knew spiritual things and so regulated their lives by an inward perception—by intuition as it were : the Law was in their heart.¹

With this inward perception of spiritual things was a spontaneous understanding and appreciation of the function and value in the spiritual-natural economy of all the material objects of the natural world. The material world was to them as it was created—the expression in ultimates of the spiritual world. The material is the complement of the spiritual, and in it, as in a mirror, the spiritual can be read. Their life was in effect a dual existence : they lived in the order of their creation as spiritual beings in a natural world.

3. DOMINATION OF THE INTELLECT

In the course of long ages which marked a steady but persistent decline in spiritual life they lost this inward perception and understanding. The life of love and service originally centred in the Divine and thence extended to the neighbour became worldly and selfish. The exercise of the intellect on the facts and concrete realities of nature, with the pleasure of reasoning thereon, appealed more to men than the spontaneous grasp and voluntary application of spiritual principles that had been the outstanding characteristic of their ancestors. This decline in spirituality, catastrophic in its results for

¹ In his book, *Arcana Caelestia*, No. 125, Emanuel Swedenborg states that the men of the Most Ancient Church, the earliest religious community of mankind, enjoyed knowledge of spiritual and heavenly things by perception, an internal sensation as a means of discovering the true and the good.

the human race, was inherently possible because of man's endowment with freedom and rationality ; and it continued till finally conscious spiritual life came to an end. Man, from being a creature acting spontaneously from the will to good became a thinking or calculating being, his life subject to the domination of the intellect.

4. LANGUAGE : WORDLESS TO VERBAL

As a poor recompense a new faculty was being developed, by which the material life was apparently enriched. Along with the conscious spiritual life had gone the faculty of spiritual speech—that wonderful universal wordless communion of soul with soul, the only outward means of which were vocal sounds, facial expression and gesture. To take the place of this¹ were developed the word languages which served by their diversity of structure to interrupt free intercourse between separate communities and to emphasize still more acutely the lapse from the spiritual state. The choice of the lower life of the world, with its obvious pleasures, and the predominance of self-centred motives of action, untrammelled by what came to be regarded as the unnecessary altruistic inhibitions of the spiritual, became universal. Instead of living the dual life of full manhood men chose the outer—the material, and the spiritual life, originally lived along with the natural, became more or less a dim and fading memory ; but it remained potential, posterity's everlasting hope.

5. THE REALIZATION OF THE SPIRITUAL : SPEAKING WITH TONGUES

In the course of the Bible narrative there are many instances recorded where the veil that grew up between

¹ See Appendix II. Language, p. 21.

the natural and the spiritual was drawn aside. In these cases men's spiritual faculties awoke to consciousness : they became aware of the substantial spiritual world that is around us here ; and, to serve some special purpose of the Divine Providence, they saw within the veil, and heard and held intercourse with its spiritual inhabitants.

In the New Testament the events that followed the great awakening of that day of Pentecost show how near the early Christians were to living the primal dual life, how the things of the spirit were esteemed, and how the world with its wealth, persecution and even martyrdom was scorned.

“ Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive ;
But to be young was very heaven.”

So wrote Wordsworth when he was affected by the rising revolutionary spirit which in 1790 seemed to usher in for mankind a new era of freedom. The poet's enthusiasm can only be but a pale reflection of the exaltation of spirit which the disciples of our Lord felt in the dawn of Christianity, when they became aware of His resurrection and re-appearance. It was no mere intellectual joy that came over them : a profound spiritual change affected them, the reverse of that change which deprived our early ancestors of the faculty of spiritual speech. No doubt the change was gradual, but its completeness is described with sudden simplicity :

“ As they were all with one accord in one place . . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues.” — (Acts ii., 1-4.)

For them the foretold future, the new world age, the Kingdom of Heaven became immediately present. For

a season they lived the primal life of spiritual men in a natural world, having all things in common and conversing in that universal language which alone is adequate to express "the wonderful works of God."

It is a strange commentary of Modernist scholars on the Apostles' Pentecostal addresses to declare that they were unintelligible. Streeter, in *The God Who Speaks*, p. 173, says :

" Prophecy which gives useful exhortation, is superior to 'speaking with tongues' which is unintelligible."

Unintelligible no doubt was the speech to those who had no ears to hear ; but to the Apostles and to the hearers who for the time being were experiencing spiritual ecstasy it was the clear-toned language of spiritual wisdom and enlightenment, vibrant with the message of Divine Love. Those who spoke and those who heard were above the plane of the natural languages of words of finite human devising. They enjoyed the spiritual consciousness of those who were in tune with the Infinite. "Devout men," they heard "the wonderful works of God," apparently in the language of their own country, but actually in the universal language in which all men are born, though all do not speak it or hear it spoken till the temporal life of this natural world gives place to the everlasting life of the spiritual world.

In order to translate something of what they had perceived spiritually into verbal speech, to make it a subject of ordinary conversation, these devout men had to compress it into the thought-forms of their understandings and thence into the words of their own language—a laborious process in which but little of what they had perceived ever reached outer speech.¹

¹ See *True Christian Religion*, Nos. 25, 280 [3] Swedenborg.

"Speaking with tongues" is the picturesque description of the strange method by which the spiritually minded conversed with one another. They communed through vocal sounds not articulated in any spoken language, by gesture, and by facial expression. This, the language of primal men, was re-introduced at Pentecost to disclose to men the spiritual glory which is theirs when they live in the order for which they were created; and to prove for all time the irrefragable spiritual foundation upon which Christianity is founded.

As the multitudes of devout men of various nationalities, who had heard and understood the Apostles, apparently in their own languages, dispersed to their own countries, they now formed small and dwindling communities in Palestine and in the countries whence they had come. The few who understood each other were unintelligible to the many who did not understand, and to whom the Gospel had to be preached in the tedious medium of vocal speech.

Paul realized this. For him the barrier between the natural and the spiritual had been broken down that memorable day on the road to Damascus. He no doubt regretted that the world in general was deaf to the inner voice of the spirit. He feared that its free use by the spiritually minded would bring spiritual things into disrepute with those whose natural minds alone were open, and whose understandings could only be approached by the outward way of hearing the Gospel preached, by hearing it, so to say, *dinned* into their ears.¹ When he wrote in I. Corinthians, xiv., it is this word "preach" he uses, which is usually translated "prophesy," as prophesy meant "preach" at the time the Bible was translated into English. It should be noted also that the words "unknown" and "foreign" are not in the

¹ Gr. *katechein*.

original when "speaking in a tongue" or "speaking with tongues" is referred to in the Bible. Thus he writes :

v. 1. Follow after charity (love, R.V.) and desire spiritual things, but rather that ye may prophesy (or preach, expound the Gospel).

v. 2. For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God : for no man understandeth ; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

Paul cannot conceal his sorrow at the rejection of the more interior and inexpressibly vivid means of communion in spiritual things in favour of the slow, tedious and laboured method of reaching the understanding through articulated language :

v. 18 : I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all :

v. 19 : Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might *teach* others also (*i.e.* din it into their ears) than ten thousand words in a tongue.

The fact that these early Christians had to use verbal speech to recount to others their versions of their spiritual experiences gave rise to the illusion that they heard the Apostles speak in their own natural language. There is no linguistic bridge between the universal spiritual language of inner perception and word speech, by which the one can pass to the other. There is only the slow and laboured way through the understanding to words—the words that each has learned as his mother tongue : and the common method of verbal communication the Apostles and early Christians had with one another was the widespread Aramaic,

the popular language of Palestine, roughly defined as "spoken Hebrew."

Do men speak with tongues to-day ? Who can tell ? The proof would be the spiritual message that was spoken. The fact that no spiritual message is now conveyed by such means for general acceptance does not mean that the way to the spiritual is no longer open. True, the way of interior perception does not appear readily available to every one in this sophisticated stage of civilization. Swedenborg's declaration, however, *Nunc Licet*, and the works he has presented to the world, offer not only assurance but also a new means of approach to all who are open to rational conviction, to attain some measure of intellectual apprehension of "the wonderful works of God" through a knowledge of the internal sense of the Word.

6. THE NEED FOR A WRITTEN WORD

Preference for life on the natural or material plane only was accompanied by a reversal in the scale of values. For the beautiful and the desirable in the religious life—goodness and truth in all their manifold forms—were substituted the gaudy and the meretricious of the worldly life—the evil and the false.

The development of the intellect as an instrument of scientific learning was accompanied by an expanding knowledge of the material properties of the external world and its natural resources in their relation to the economy of nature only. The idea of grandeur which had originally characterized the spiritual and the inner moral life was now transferred to achievement in natural ambition and in natural science ; but while material development was progressive and spectacular it was counterbalanced by a notable lag, or rather a marked decline in moral and spiritual progress.

7. WRITING INTRODUCED FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORD

In consequence of this decline from the spiritual to the material plane of life the need arose for giving more concrete and lasting form to the interior principles which were losing their grip on the lives of the people. Their pristine knowledge of Divine things which was originally instinctively acquired in the natural order of their lives, and which Priest and Prophet later declared to them by oral tradition, had now to be expressed in outward visual forms adapted to this purpose so that there should always be among the people in their decline a deposit of spiritual knowledge adequate to maintain a saving minimum at least of spiritual life in the world.

Long after verbal speech the art of writing, upon which to the modern mind intellectual life appears mainly to rest, came into existence as a comparatively late achievement in man's intellectual development, primarily so that the Law of the Lord might have an outward way of appeal to men's minds when they had closed the old-time inward way. And such is the efficacy of writing that the Word, by slow, gradual and seemingly fortuitous stages, once committed to this ultimate form of expression, is now established indestructible, despite any human efforts that might be made to destroy or even suppress it.

Thus began a sacred literature, first in pictorial and then in alphabetic form, which was in its earliest stages supplemented by the spoken word of spiritual leaders. The earliest form of the written Word was that given to the decadent posterity of primeval man, by which they were reminded of the heavenly state from which they had fallen, and of the steps to be taken to regain that state. This Word accompanied the migrations from

mankind's original home, and was the source of the various mythologies that grew up when its spiritual significance had been forgotten. It formed also the nucleus of the religious, philosophic, social and scientific literatures which were subsequently developed in the various nations which resulted from these migrations. In course of time it lost its early power of appeal, and through processes of adaptation and assimilation it became modified according to the genius of the various nations in the progress of their distinctive development. This pre-historic form of the Word has not survived in any of the ancient literatures of the world in its entirety, but sufficient essential portions of it have been incorporated in the Jewish Scriptures to make the Old Testament an adequate expression of the Word till the Jewish Dispensation came to an end.

When the Jewish Church itself, unable to realize the nature of the Word entrusted to it, by violence put an end to the part played by Priest and Prophet in revealing a knowledge of spiritual things to man, the necessity arose for a complete expression of that revelation, an expression which should be at once universal in its scope and individual in its appeal. To the Old Testament therefore was added the New, and the Bible, not a book in the ordinary sense of the term, but a sacred literature, contains as no other book could, the Word of God as delivered from prehistoric times for all time, the complete revelation of Divine Truth in the lowest form comprehensible to man.

APPENDIX II

"To take the place of this (wordless communion).
Ch. II., p. 13.

Language.

In *The Decline of the West*, Vol. II., p. 114, Dr. Spengler states that language is the form in which the consciousness of one man gets into relation with that of another. This begins by being a mere unconscious living expression that is received as a sensation, but gradually develops into a conscious technique of communication that depends upon a common sense of the meanings attached to signs.

Language is of two kinds : expression language, springing from the longing inherent in all life to actualize itself before witnesses, and communication language, that is meant to be understood by definite beings. He points out that the practice of speaking requires one first to feel the known speech medium, and secondly, to understand the intention put into it on this occasion. As the signs are fixed but not their meaning the adept reads between the lines and understands. He continues, p. 136 :

"The deeper and more intimate a spiritual communion, the more readily it dispenses with signs and words ; a real comradeship makes itself understood with few words, a real faith is silent altogether. The purest symbol of an understanding that has got beyond language is the old peasant couple sitting in the evening in front of their cottage and entertaining one another without a word being passed, each knowing what the other is thinking and feeling. Words would only disturb the harmony. From such a state of reciprocal understanding something or other reaches back, far beyond the collective existence of the higher animal world, deep in the primeval history of free-moving life."

Verbal language, as he says (p. 138), is a very late phenomenon, not a young shoot, but the last blossom borne by one of the ramifications of the parent stem of all vocal speeches.

There is a vocal speech familiar to the simpler genera of animals, and in this expression motives, as a roar of anger, and communication signs, as a cry of warning, can be clearly distinguished. The verbal language of men, however, is a radically different thing. It includes these sounds of the lower animals' speech, but it was not a development of that speech :

" There can be no doubt that the sign which made it possible for the future word-language to detach itself from the general vocal speech of the animal world was that which I call ' name '—a vocal image serving to denote a Something in the world around. . . . It is unnecessary to speculate as to how the first names came to be. No human speech accessible to us at this time of day gives us the least *point d'appui* here. But, contrary to the view of modern research, I consider that the decisive turn came not from a change of the throat-transformation or from any other physiological factor . . . not even an increased capacity for self-expression by existing means, like, say, the transition from word to sentence, but from a profound spiritual change."

THE BIBLE IN ENGLISH

1. IN MSS. WYCLIFFE.
2. IN PRINT.
 - (1) The Renaissance.
 - (2) Tindale.
 - (3) Coverdale.
 - (4) Matthew.
 - (5) The Great Bible.
 - (6) The Geneva Bible.
 - (7) The Bishops' Bible.
 - (8) The Authorized Version.
 - (9) The Revised Version.

THE Bible is justly regarded as the greatest Book in the world ; and our Authorized Version of 1611, embodying the fruits of nearly a century of labour, culminating in the great national effort sponsored by the king himself, is universally acknowledged to be the noblest version in the hands of any people.

1. IN MSS. JOHN WYCLIFFE

Before the introduction of Printing portions of the Bible had been rendered into the vernacular by Bede and others, but English-speaking people owe to John Wycliffe (1324-84) the first MS. appearance of the Bible in their mother tongue. He and his Lollard followers determined that they should be free from all spiritual domination ; and, to enable the people to work out their own salvation, he resolved to translate the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue. He first translated the Apocalypse, then the Gospels and finally completed the New Testament about 1380. A version of the Old Testament was soon added, which appears to have been translated by one of his friends, Nicholas de Hereford, as far as Baruch

in the Apocrypha, and probably finished by Wycliffe himself, so that he saw the great aim of his life accomplished before he died in 1384. This translation was based upon the Vulgate of the Fourteenth Century, mainly the work of Jerome, which was the only text accessible to Wycliffe. In a completely revised form, by another of his friends, John Purvey, much of the stiffness due to close adherence to the Latin original was removed. This revised version exhibited the strength and beauty of the Midland dialect which was destined to emerge as Standard English ; and it survived the persecution which destroyed the Lollards as a party in 1412 till it was superseded by the printed versions of the sixteenth century.

2. IN PRINT

(i) *The Bible and the Renaissance*

In the fifteenth century sacred literature shared in the great outburst of literary activity which resulted from the Revival of Learning ; and with the invention of printing a new instrument was put into the hands of the Church as well as of the Reformers whose dominant zeal was the promulgation of the Scriptures. The need was felt for vernacular versions based not only upon the Latin but also upon the original texts ; and this led to intensive study of Hebrew and Greek. Following upon the publication of the Latin Vulgate, supposed to be the first book printed about 1455, there appeared the Old Testament in Hebrew in 1488, and many years later the Greek New Testament with a new Latin translation by Erasmus in 1516. Although the new study of Hebrew and Greek was vehemently opposed by the Church, editions of the Scriptures in the original multiplied with great rapidity, and the Reformers found much new

material accessible to aid them in translating the Bible into the native tongue of their followers. Luther's New Testament appeared in 1522, his Pentateuch in 1523, the Historical Books and the Hagiographa in 1524, the Prophets at various intervals, and his whole Bible in 1534. Zwingli with others based a new translation upon this, and the result appeared as the Zurich Bible in 1529. A French translation from the Vulgate was published, 1523-34, by Lefevre (Father Stapulensis), and before the end of the fifteenth century Bibles had also been printed in Spanish, Italian, Dutch and Bohemian.

(2) *Tindale, 1484-1536*

The New Learning was pursued with great eagerness by scholars in this country, and when Erasmus was invited to Cambridge, 1509-14, as Professor of Greek it was probably his fame that induced Tindale to study there. Tindale's zeal to enable the people to establish the truth in their heart by seeing the Scripture plainly laid before them in their mother tongue moved him to translate the New Testament. Persecution in this country caused him to seek refuge on the Continent, and at Cologne in 1525 he began to print the New Testament, the translation of which he had then completed. He finished the publication at Worms, and in 1526 copies of his work reached London. It was eagerly bought and as eagerly sought out to be destroyed, but proscription of the book only seemed to strengthen its life. His translation of the Pentateuch appeared at Marburg, 1530, and during the imprisonment that preceded his martyrdom in 1536 he completed the Old Testament text as far as Chronicles. Before his death he heard that the Queen, Anne Boleyn, had befriended a merchant of Antwerp who had suffered for aiding in the circulation of the earlier editions of the New Testament, so he caused a special copy to be printed and

presented to her ; and in the same year—the year of her own death also—an edition of his revised New Testament, the first volume of Holy Scripture to be printed in England, appeared from the press of a printer who had gained the Queen's favour.

To Tindale's genius as a translator more than to any other man is due the present form of our Bible. No version shows more markedly the heroic mould of his character and the originality of his work as a translator. Though he was acquainted with Luther's version and the Vulgate his translation is in the main an independent one, based upon the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Ever bearing in mind the lay people whom he sought to teach he aimed at purity and simplicity of language, features which more than any others make for permanence. His influence has ensured that our Bible should be popular in form and not academic. His achievement has fixed the type according to which subsequent labourers worked.

(3) *Coverdale's Bible, 1535*

Miles Coverdale, 1488–1568, completed what Tindale had left unfinished. Born in Yorkshire he studied theology and philosophy at Cambridge. He was a friend of Cromwell and More, and it was probably under their patronage that he was enabled to carry on his translation of the Bible, which was printed at Zurich and dedicated to Henry VIII. in 1535. Unlike Tindale he did not translate from the original texts but relied mainly upon the Zurich Bible, the Vulgate and Tindale's translation. Next year the second edition was printed in England, and is the first Bible printed in this country.

"Coverdale's Bible, simple, adroit and beautifully cadenced, is of supreme interest as the first complete translation of the Bible in English ; and

much of his work has passed through the channels of Matthew's Bible and the Great Bible into the Authorized Version of 1611, and became part of the great literary heritage of the British people."

(W. R. Cunningham,
Glasgow Herald, 4th October, 1935.)

(4) *Matthew's Bible*, 1537

John Rogers, a friend of Tindale's, under the name of Thomas Matthew, compiled a composite Bible, made up from Tindale's New Testament and Pentateuch, and Coverdale's Bible. This version, known as Matthew's Bible, was printed abroad in 1537 and was used freely by all subsequent translators.

(5) *The Great Bible*, 1538

The following year Coverdale undertook a new version of previous productions with a more complete critical collation of Hebrew and Latin texts. The difficulty of printing the annotations induced him to transfer the work to Paris, but a complete text of the Scriptures was provided in 1538. This was corrected and re-issued with a preface by Cranmer in 1540, and at the instigation of Cromwell was required to be set up in some convenient place in every church in the kingdom. The publication of this edition, known as the Great Bible, and the injunction for its public exhibition in every parish church, marked a memorable epoch in the history of the Bible. It was the Bible of the Edwardian reformers, and the Bible presented to Elizabeth on her accession.

(6) *The Geneva Bible*, 1560

The Geneva Bible, known as the "Breeches Bible" from its translation of Gen. iii. 7, was produced by exiled Reformers at Geneva. They collaborated in the

publication of the Bible in a more complete and handy form than had yet appeared in English, with a dedication to Elizabeth. Designed for popular use, it was printed for the first time in Roman type, and the Books were divided into chapters and verses. The Apocrypha were omitted, and the text was illustrated by marginal notes. These, however, were so strongly Calvinistic and anti-church in tone as to militate against its general use; and the revisers of the Authorized Version, in adopting its popular features, wisely decided to omit marginal notes of a doctrinal nature. Although it was never sanctioned for use in churches, it soon became the most popular version with English-speaking peoples, the Great Bible being the subject of much disparaging comparison.

(7) *The Bishops' Bible, 1568*

In consequence of the disfavour into which the Great Bible had fallen Archbishop Parker undertook a new translation which would remove its errors and obscurities. This he did intending it to displace the Great Bible in church use and the Geneva Bible in popular use. Amongst the revisers were eight bishops and this version which appeared in 1568 with the simple title, *The Holy Bible*, was named the Bishops' Bible. The name, the "Treacle Bible" was soon attached to it because of its translation of Jer. viii. 22. It, however, was sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority as the version to be used by the clergy, but it did not supersede the Geneva Bible in its hold on the favour of the people.

(8) *The Authorized Version, 1611*

The rivalry between the Bishops' Bible and the Geneva Bible stimulated the desire for a version that should be universally acceptable. When the idea was

broached at a conference on Church matters at Hampton Court in 1604 it was strongly taken up by King James I., and he took a prominent part in arranging the appointment of the fifty-four scholars who were selected for the work. It is a remarkable fact, in keeping with the nature of the Word as of Divine authorship, that no individual can claim responsibility for this, which is universally agreed to be the best of any of the translations in the world. It is not known how the first list of revisers was drawn up, but it is known that forty-seven actually took part in the revision. These were divided into six groups, and they set to work in 1606, two groups meeting at Oxford, two at Cambridge and two at Westminster, working at such sections of the text as were allotted to them. To guide them in their labours and to ensure that individual idiosyncracies should be suppressed and only renderings allowed that were agreeable to groups of revisers, a set of instructions was drawn up, some of which were : 1. The Bishop's Bible was to form the basis of their work. 2. The proper names were to be retained with as little alteration as possible. 3. The old ecclesiastical words, as "church" for "congregation" were to be kept. 4. The division of chapters was to remain. 5. No marginal notes, except for the explanation of Hebrew and Greek words, were to be admitted. 6. The following translations were to be used when they agreed with the original better than the Bishop's Bible—Tindale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, the Great and the Geneva Bibles. In 1610 the entire translation was reviewed by six delegates, two from each of the three centres, to whom six others were added. In 1611 the whole work was completed and printed at London—"newly translated out of the original tongues ; and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by His Majesty's special commandment . . . appointed to be read in churches."

It at once seized and held the heart and mind of all-prelates and people alike. It was the great event to which the labours of a century of devoted scholars had paved the way. Its great merit is that it reproduces the originals with striking fidelity in simple, racy, idiomatic English at its purest. By its intrinsic worth it has established itself as part of the national mind ; and by commanding a foremost place in the literatures of the world it has ensured for all time that the Word of God will compass the uttermost ends of the earth.

(9) *The Revised Version, 1885*

The Revised Version, completed in 1885, was produced by scholars working along much the same lines as were followed by the revisers who gave us the Authorized Version. It was felt by some that as great advances had been made in modern Biblical research the time was opportune for correction where error was noted and alteration where improvement seemed desirable in the text of the Authorized Version. The result, however, has not had the success its promoters anticipated. The Revised Version is more accurate, more academic than the Authorized Version, but it lacks the popular appeal. While it may serve a useful purpose as a marginal note for doubtful passages, it cannot hope to dislodge from general use the Authorized Version, broad-based on the Midland dialect of the homely vernacular, which has survived as the most characteristic yet beautiful form of literary English.

CHAPTER IV

1. MANUSCRIPTS OF THE BIBLE.

- (1) The Septuagint.
- (2) The Imperial Bible. Eusebius.
- (3) The Vatican. Codex B.
- (4) The Sinaitic. Codex Aleph.
- (5) The Alexandrine. Codex A.
- (6) The Ephraem. Codex C.

2. VERSIONS.

The Old Vulgate.

The Vulgate. Jerome.

3. THE NAME—BIBLE.

I. MANUSCRIPTS OF THE BIBLE

(1) *The Septuagint*

PRIOR to the Christian era, as late as the third century B.C., a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures was gradually being produced for the use of Hellenistic Jews. From this time the Jews of the Dispersion were settled in large numbers in Babylon, Syria and Egypt. Greek was the universal language of literature and intercourse, and Greek speaking Jews everywhere desired to have their Scriptures in their colloquial speech. They had thrown off much of that exclusiveness which was fostered by the continued use of Hebrew in Palestine, and were susceptible to the varied cultural influences which came to them through the knowledge and use of the Greek language.

The legend that this translation was originally made at Alexandria by a council of seventy-two scholars, six representatives from each of the Tribes, arose about the Christian era. This version became exceedingly popular, and was probably the form in which the Scriptures were most commonly known in Palestine at the time of

our Lord. As it was not produced under the strict supervision of the religious authorities in Palestine, it lacks accuracy in translation, and it includes Apocryphal Books which were never admitted into the Hebrew Scriptures. It is important as a version of the Old Testament not only because of the popularity it attained but also because subsequent translations, as the Vatican, Sinaitic and Alexandrine, base their Old Testament versions upon it.

(2) *The Imperial Bible*

Our earliest MSS. of the complete Bible belong to the fourth-fifth centuries A.D. During the great persecution of Diocletian (284–305) churches were ordered to be destroyed and all copies of the sacred Scriptures were ordered to be burnt on pain of death to their possessors. Many to save themselves gave up religious books which were not accepted by the church. This made it essential that books which were accepted should be distinguished from the others. Thus the term "canonical" for books regarded as authoritative became a familiar term, and the "canon" tended to become fixed.

The Emperor Constantine (306–337), who embraced Christianity, showed his zeal for the faith by ordering fifty copies of the Bible to be made and conveyed to him for public use. This order he sent to Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, who had witnessed with sorrow the public burning of the Scriptures by Diocletian. Eusebius was particularly well qualified for this important commission, for he was a recognized authority on church history and literature, and he had succeeded to the charge of the most famous Christian library in the world, established by his predecessor in Caesarea, Pamphilus.¹ None of these copies, which no doubt exhibited the ripest scholarship and most skilled craftsmanship of the day, have

¹ *The Bible in the Church*, Westcote, p. 158.

survived, but their influence on the form the Bible was to assume must have been very great.

We may conjecture with some degree of certainty from statements by Eusebius on the subject that these copies, the first Greek Bibles issued for public use, contained in the Old Testament the Books of the Hebrew Canon with the Alexandrine Apocrypha, and in the New Testament all the Books as now received. It may be doubted, however, whether he ascribed full canonical rank to Esther in the Old Testament and the Apocalypse in the New. It should be noted that in deciding what religious writings to accept and what to reject for inclusion in the Bible Eusebius had only to rely upon two things—the collective testimony of antiquity as expressed in the works of the chief ecclesiastical writers and his own judgment.

(3) *The Vatican, or Codex B*

This manuscript belongs to the fourth century, and is the most reliable of the early Greek copies. It is, however, imperfect, lacking table of contents at the beginning, and part of Genesis and Psalms, and at the end from Heb. ix. 14 onwards. Its Apocryphal books are intermingled with the Old Testament Books, an unusual feature, and the books of the Maccabees and the Prayer of Manasses are omitted.

(4) *The Sinaitic, or Codex Aleph*

This manuscript receives its name from the fact that it was found by Tischendorf in the Monastery of St. Catherine, at the foot of Mt. Sinai. While visiting the library of the Convent in 1814, in the course of his manuscript research work he noticed some pages of a copy of the Greek Septuagint Old Testament older than any he had ever seen before. The authorities of the Convent, however, would only allow him to take away a few pages. Convinced that he was on the track of one

of the oldest MSS. he made persistent efforts to secure the remainder; but not till 1859, when he visited the Monastery under the patronage of Alexander II., Emperor of Russia, was he able to obtain the MS. Like the Vatican MS. it includes the Apocryphal books among the Books of the Old Testament, and to the New Testament it adds the Shepherd and the Epistle of Barnabas.

This copy is of approximately the same date as the Vatican, and the scholars who produced the Revised Version attached the greatest importance to them, neither of which was available for the translators of the Authorized Version, who completed it from the Traditional Text. As in both these MSS., the last twelve verses of Mark are wanting, the Revised Version prints them as in some degree doubtful, and adds the marginal note: "The two oldest Greek Manuscripts—the Vatican and the Sinaitic—omit these verses."

(5) *The Alexandrine, or Codex A*

This MS. is a little later in date. It is in the British Museum, and was presented to Charles I. in 1628 by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople. It consists of four volumes, the first three containing practically the whole of the Old Testament, but the fourth, containing the New Testament, is imperfect. Most of Matthew is missing, also part of John and 2 Corinthians. After the Apocalypse, however, it has the First Epistle of Clement, and a fragment of the Second Epistle. This fact, along with the omission of the Shepherd, seems to point to Syria rather than Alexandria as being its original source. Its Apocrypha omits 2 Esdras and contains 3 and 4 Maccabees, which are not found in accepted versions.

(6) *The Ephraem, or Codex C*

As illustrative of the difficulties that have been met by Biblical research workers mention might be made of

Codex C. Somewhere in the twelfth century a Syrian Father, Ephraem Syrus, possessed a Greek MS. to which he attached so little importance that he partially rubbed out the original writing, and on the same parchment wrote theological discourses of his own. This parchment was subjected to chemical treatment in 1834. His writing was erased and the original was restored so successfully that the MS., now known as the Codex of Ephraem, reveals a considerable portion of the Old and New Testaments, probably written about the same time as the Alexandrine. A MS. restored in this way is called a Palimpsest or Rescript, and much valuable ancient literature, secular and sacred, exists in this form.

2. VERSIONS

Contemporary with these early MSS. were many versions of the Scriptures in Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Egyptian and Ethiopic as Christianity flourished in the West, East and South. In the West the Latin versions were increasing with great rapidity as Latin was spreading as the language of the Church and literature generally. These versions, the Old Vulgate, originated in North Africa, based on the Septuagint, and were naturally becoming very corrupt as the old Classical Latin was degenerating into the Low Latin of popular use. The need for a revised version in Latin was widely felt and Damasus, Bishop of Rome, induced his secretary, Jerome, to undertake the work.

In the course of his labours, consulting MSS. which probably went back to the time of the Apostles, Jerome revised the Old Vulgate with the help of the Greek MSS., and translated the Old Testament from the original Hebrew, A.D. 383-404. His work by slow degrees superseded the Old Vulgate, and finally became The Vulgate, or common version of the Bible; and for more than a

thousand years it was the most powerful influence on Biblical scholarship in the West.

Jerome insisted on the distinction between the Books of the Hebrew Scriptures and the books suited for ecclesiastical use—the Apocrypha—and decided to correct only the Canonical Scriptures. He was induced to include in his work Tobit and Judith, but the rest of the Apocrypha in the modern Vulgate has been added from the Old Vulgate.

3. THE NAME—BIBLE

It is interesting to note that up to Jerome's day there was no single collective term for the whole Bible. The Jews called the Old Testament "The Law, The Prophets and The Holy Writings," or more comprehensively "The Law." Jerome regarded it as "The Divine Library,"—a singularly appropriate title for the contents of the Old and New Testaments to bear, consisting as they do of writings of many ages of more or less sacred significance and value. About his time the Greek term "Biblia"—"The Books"—came to be used of the Greek versions which were in most common circulation. This was superseded by the term "Biblion"—"The Book"—as a collective singular, and from this word "The Bible" has acquired the name by which it is now universally known. It should be remembered that the term "Bible," whatever meaning is attached to it, was and is applied to various collections of writings not always consisting of the same books, and these books were not always regarded as of equal authoritative value.

CHAPTER V

THE COMPOSITION OF THE BIBLE

1. THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.
2. THE APOCRYPHA.
3. THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

THE development of the Old Testament from the earliest beginnings of the Jewish Scriptures to the form in which we now have it was a slow and wonderful process. It exhibits at all the various stages the working of a *divinely inspired selection*—to employ a phrase which has passed into conventional use by modern Biblical students. This culminated in the decision of the Council of Jamnia A.D. c. 100, which might be regarded as the final official act of the consummated Jewish Church. During the closing years of the Jewish era and the early years of Christianity there was current a vast religious literature, witnessing to the profound spiritual changes that were taking place. This literature was very varied in character, ranging from romances like Esther, historical records like the Maccabees, poetical dramas like Job, to the sapiential books as the Wisdom of Jesus Ben-Sirach, the Book of Wisdom of Solomon, and Apocalyptic books like Enoch, Baruch, Adam and the Twelve Patriarchs. The writers of these books did not attach their names to them, but ascribed them to saints and heroes in their early national history in order that they might carry greater influence on the disturbed minds of a very distracted people. The result was that many believed them to be the works of those whose names they bore, and were willing to elevate them to the rank of the Scriptures. Jews who had come under the broadening influence of Greek culture were particularly inclined to

admit these, and Greek versions of the Scriptures from the Septuagint and they included several of these religious books.

In order to counteract this Josephus, writing about A.D. 94, expressed the view that no books later than the last of the direct succession of the Prophets—Nehemiah c. 425 B.C.—should be included in the Scriptures. He says (*Contra Apion*, i, 8) :

“ For we have not an innumerable multitude of books amongst us disagreeing from and contradicting one another, as the Greeks have, but only twenty-two books (really twenty-four of ours, for he reckoned Ruth with Judges, and Lamentations with Jeremiah), which contain the record of all the past times ; and these are justly believed in ; and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of 3000 years. But as to the time from the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets which were after Moses wrote down what was done in their time in thirteen books.¹ The remaining four books—Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles, Ecclesiastes—contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true that our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but it hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time.”

This view of Josephus, although inconsistent with the facts, was the view accepted by the strict Jews, and was

¹ The thirteen books were, eight Prophets (four former---Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings : four later—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Twelve Minor), Job, Esther, Daniel, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah.

the view given effect to by the Pharisaic Council at Jamnia. This Council ratified the three-fold division of the Sacred Scriptures as containing all the books that were written according to the traditional rule of faith. These three great divisions, referred to in the New Testament under varying phraseology as the Law or the Prophets (Mat. v. 17), the Law and the Prophets (Mat. vii. 12), the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke, xxiv. 44), mark the three stages by which the collection assumed its final form. The divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures with their groups of books are as follows :

I. THE LAW, OR TORAH :

The Pentateuch, or the Five Books from Genesis to Deuteronomy.

II. THE PROPHETS, OR NEBIIM :

(a) The Former Prophets : Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings.

(b) The Latter Prophets : Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve (the Minor Prophets).

III. THE SACRED WRITINGS, OR KETHUBIM :

(a) Three Poetical Books : Psalms, Proverbs, Job.

(b) The Five Rolls : Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.

(c) Three Books : Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles.

The former Prophets are so called simply from their position in the collection, and not from any assumption of their date. They are historical books, giving a connected history of the nation from the death of Moses to the Babylonian Captivity. Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra-Nehemiah are reckoned each as one book, for they were not divided by the Jews till the sixteenth century.

With the consummation of the Jewish Church, marked by the rending of the Temple veil, came also the end of the corporate existence of the Jews as a nation. Initiated with the call of Abram the Jewish nation had been specially fostered by the Divine Providence to be the medium of Divine intercourse with men. But the religious idea with its central fact of the unity of the Godhead was taken from the exclusive keeping of the Jews. Like an acorn planted in a flower-pot it burst its confines, and in Christianity found a new field in which to develop. It is no longer in the sole keeping of one nation. It cuts across all national and racial barriers ; and, based on the Word in the Jewish Scriptures, linked up in organic unity with the Word in the New Testament, Christianity, with all the potentiality of the true Christian Religion, is the universal Church for all time.

2. THE APOCRYPHA

Before the time of Origen (185-254), presbyter and teacher of philosophy and theology at Caesarea, the term canon had been in use to describe the truth recognized by the Church or the test of doctrine. The books that were in accordance with the traditional rule of faith, and embodied it, were therefore said by Origen to be canonized or canonical. But since the Scriptures contain in written form this standard of faith, they themselves came to be spoken of as the canon or rule by which other books or statements might be tested. The term Apocrypha, on the other hand, was first used by Jerome (c. 420) of those religious books which, although indispensable for the history of Judaism and valuable for devotional purposes, were never invested with the canonical dignity of the Hebrew Scriptures. While they were included in various Greek versions of the Scriptures they were generally regarded as of secondary importance.

It is with this meaning rather than the meaning "secret" or "hidden away" that they have been bound up with our Bible till the nineteenth century. The Greek Fathers, and also Augustine, seemed to draw but little distinction between them and the accepted Scriptures, and the Council of Trent (1546) put them alongside the Scriptures as sacred and canonical. The English Church has always included them in the Bible, and, following Jerome, says they are to be read for "examples of life and instruction of manners," but are not to be appealed to as authoritative for the foundation of any doctrine. The Reformers, however, went back to the Hebrew canon and their position is set forth in the Authorized Version as it appears without the Apocrypha.

The books commonly known as the Apocrypha are :

1 and 2 Esdras,	Baruch,
Tobit,	Song of the Three Children,
Judith,	Story of Susanna,
Remainder of Esther,	Bel and the Dragon,
The Wisdom of Solomon,	Prayer of Manasses,
The Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus).	1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees.

3. THE NEW TESTAMENT

During the greater part of the first century A.D. the Hebrew Scriptures continued to be the only Book for public use in the Church. When, however, Christianity made its appearance, and began to attract those in whom the new faith was being established, a new literature sprang up. This was not only of a devotional kind but also hortative and didactic, to meet the needs of the times. The Apostles and the early Christian Fathers had strenuous missionary work to do, and their addresses and letters to groups of believers in distant places were reproduced and read with eagerness. Moreover, as the

hope of an immediate return of the Lord faded, a strong desire arose for records of His life and teaching. In due time the four-fold Gospel story emerged to take the place of all such records and oral tradition. The Gospels, the Acts, the twenty-one generally accepted Epistles and the Apocalypse of John gradually, and again by Divinely inspired selection, took their place with the Hebrew Scriptures as the Bible of the Christian Church. Books which were sometimes included with the early collections of the Christian Scriptures but finally rejected by later compilers were The Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistles of Barnabas and Clement.

By the fourth century A.D.—the time of Eusebius—the Sacred Scriptures, by virtue of their dynamic and intrinsic worth, had acquired a distinctiveness denied to much contemporary devotional, epistolary and Apocalyptic literature—apocryphal but valuable in its own way and degree ; and the Bible had become the Divinely appointed repository in the world of the Word of God.

CHAPTER VI

1. THE SOURCES OF THE EARLY BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.
2. J. THE JAHVIST NARRATIVE.
3. E. THE ELOHIST NARRATIVE.
4. D. THE DEUTERONOMIC NARRATIVE. The First Written Book of the Law, Discovered in Reign of Josiah, 621 B.C.
5. P. THE PRIESTS' CODE.
6. THE HEXATEUCH.
7. PARALLELISM.

I. THE SOURCES OF THE EARLY BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

WHEN the early Books of the Bible are studied from the literary point of view they are seen to fall into two series : one consisting of the Books from Genesis to 2 Kings (excepting Ruth which in the Hebrew canon is treated as part of the Hagiographa), including the period from the Creation to the release of Jehoiachin in Babylon, 562 B.C., and the other consisting of the Books of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, beginning with Adam and ending with the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem, 432 B.C. These two series differ in scope and manner of treatment, but nevertheless appear to be constructed upon a similar plan. No entire Book in either series consists of a single original work ; but older writings, or sources, have been combined by a compiler in such a manner that their component parts are easily distinguishable.¹ Writers of the Hebrew historical Books—excepting Ruth and Esther—do not as modern historians do, *rewrite* the matter in their own language ; they excerpt from the sources at their disposal

¹ Dr. Driver, who is closely followed here, uses the term " authors " where " writers " would be more consistent. See p. 3, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*.

such passages as are suitable to their purpose, and incorporate them in their work, introducing only such modifications as are necessary for the purpose in view or accommodating them to their plan. These writers, however, exhibit such strongly marked individualities of style that the documents or sources thus combined can generally be distinguished from one another. The literary differences are, moreover, frequently accompanied by difference of treatment or representation of the history which serves to confirm the conclusions of the literary analysis. The Books of Judges and Kings for example, resemble each other in their mode of composition : in each a series of older narratives has been taken by the compiler and fitted into a framework supplied by himself, the framework in both cases, moreover, composed of similar elements and designed from the same point of view. The Pentateuch includes elements homogeneous, at least in large measure, with those of which the Book of Joshua is composed. The term Hexateuch has therefore been adopted to cover the first six Books because of their strongly marked similarity.

Although literary resemblances appear in Joshua and in the Pentateuch there is no evidence that Joshua with the Pentateuch ever constituted an independent literary work. There is, moreover, the fact that the Samaritan Scriptures consisted of the Pentateuch alone. It is probable therefore that if the Schism between the Jews and the Samaritans took place *c.* 432 B.C., additions to the sacred text were introduced by the Jews after that date.

2. J. THE JAHVIST NARRATIVE

Not only have modern research workers established with some appearance of probability the composite nature of the structure of the early Books of the Bible but they have presented a very interesting theory of

how the result as we have it has been achieved. According to this theory, which of course is no more than a theory, the early Books have been compiled from four sources which are supposed to have existed in separate form, and are designated J, E, D, and P. The oldest portion, it is conjectured, begins with the Creation story inserted in our Bible at Gen. ii. 4, beginning at the middle of the verse: "In the day that the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) made the earth and the heavens." This is the Jahvist narrative (J), and is distinguished by its use of the term Jehovah, which is persistently avoided by the writers of the parallel narrative with which it is combined. The writer (the term is used in the singular although it is quite impossible to determine whether one or more writers were employed in its composition) lived in Judah, probably about the time of Elijah, c. 910 B.C. He collected legends and stories chiefly of the Southern Kingdom oral and written, from contemporary sources as well as from deposits of ancient literatures which were even then lost in their entirety. These stories of places, incidents and persons reached back, past Moses and Abraham, to prehistoric times. Many such stories had been cherished for centuries in the memories of the people.

In confirmation of the conjecture that the writer of this narrative belonged to the Land of Judah, it is noted that Judah holds priority in his preferences when the record covers incidents narrated also in the other work. Thus for instance, in the story of Joseph, Judah takes the prominent part, but in the Elohist narrative Reuben, who was Jacob's eldest born, takes the lead.

3. E. THE ELOHIST NARRATIVE

The Elohist narrative (E), which consistently gives prominence to famous places of the Northern Kingdom,

such as Shechem and Bethel, and to the Ephraimite hero Joshua, is generally supposed to have been produced in Israel about fifty years later. This Northern sacred Book was combined by later writers with the earlier work somewhere about 650 B.C., and the resulting Book (J, E) is the earliest form from which the Pentateuch was to arise. This Book, supplemented by oral teaching, continued to be the Bible for prophet, priest and people, but what its actual content was we are unable to determine. It probably received additions as priests and statesmen were moved to record the ever pressing Divine injunctions and admonitions the people had need of. How great the people's need was and how great their neglect of the religious life we know from the history of the time.

4. D. THE DEUTERONOMIC NARRATIVE

The earliest historical mention of the Bible in written form is in the story of the dramatic discovery of a Book of the Law in the Temple at Jerusalem in the year 621 B.C., which led to a stirring religious revival. The story is told in 2 Kings, xxii.-xxiii. One day in the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent Shaphan the Scribe to settle accounts with Hilkiah the High Priest for repairs to the Temple. When their business was concluded the High Priest showed the Scribe a Book of the Law which had been found in a chamber of the Temple during the repairs. Shaphan brought it to the King who was profoundly moved when he read it. It was at once accepted by Priest and King as the very Word of God, and when it was read by the King to the assembled people as he stood by a pillar of the Temple it convicted them of the gross abominations they as a nation were practising, following the evil example set by Manasseh and Amon, Josiah's immediate predecessors. With the

aid of the young Prophet Jeremiah, Josiah at once instituted a reformatory campaign, re-establishing as its central religious feature the Passover in all its pristine purity and simplicity.

When this Book was written, or how long it had lain in the obscurity of that room in the Temple before the hands of a workman brought it to light, are questions that may never be answered. It is also impossible to say what its contents were. It is probable that its writer was conversant with the Jahvist and the Elohist narratives, either separately or combined, as well as with the other oral and written religious literature of his day. External evidence of its relatively late writing may be noted in the fact that its well-marked style affects the Prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah and the writer of Kings, while the prophetic writers of the eighth century, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah and Micah show no trace of its influence. Because of its powerful influence in recalling the people to Moses, his Law and teaching, it has been conjectured that it consisted of the Book of Deuteronomy, at least in part, and it is designated "D." The writer of Kings quotes twice from this "Law," and both quotations are in Deuteronomy.

5. P. THE PRIESTS' CODE

Despite the Divine warnings the religious decline of the people proceeded apace, and the predicted national catastrophe could not be averted. The Captivity of Judah took place in 588 B.C., and the possibility of religious life seemed at an end. However, the Law lived on, and by pen and tongue in Babylon the Word of God still reached those who would receive it. Through the unremitting toil of faithful prophets, priests and scribes the sacred writings that were reverenced as the Law were consolidated, and a version, known as the Priests' Code

(thus denoted P), was completed, probably in large measure due to the labours of the Prophet Ezekiel. This version, drawing largely from traditional sources, but showing marked preference for the Elohist narrative, treats with particular minuteness the ceremonial institutions of the Hebrews, comprising the Sabbath, Circumcision, Passover, Feasts, the Tabernacle and the Priesthood. In particular it is marked by the inclusion of that distinctive element, the Ceremonial section of Leviticus xvii.-xxvi., which has been termed the Law of Holiness.

6. THE HEXATEUCH

A hundred years later, in 444 B.C., when Ezra, "a ready scribe in the Law of Moses" (Ezra vii. 6), returned to Jerusalem with bands of liberated Jews, he no doubt took with him the Law in its latest form, the Hexateuch, consisting of the five Books of Moses and Joshua. This he read to the assembled people at the Feast of Tabernacles, inaugurating amid scenes of great enthusiasm another popular revival.

7. PARALLELISM

It may be observed here in anticipation of what is said later¹ that textual research has emphasized a feature in the Bible which appears throughout Hebrew literature as a distinguishing characteristic, namely parallelism or dualism. The Letter of the Word is a medium sensitive to the last jot and tittle for the expression of spiritual truth. This truth has reference to the spiritual nature of man, which consists of the complementary faculties, the understanding and the will. These faculties cannot exist apart, but one may predominate over the other, and each may develop apparently separately as the result

¹ Ch. VII. and X.

of guidance specially adapted to its own nature. In the balanced expressions of parallelisms one has reference to the understanding and the other to the will—the supreme reference being to the Divine Wisdom and the Divine Love.

The case is similar with those portions of the Word that have been distinguished by textual scholars as separate independent narratives, the Elohist and the Jahvist. In the Elohist the name God is used because the reference is to the understanding, God being the name of the Divine Truth. In the Jahvist the name Jehovah is used because the reference is to the will, and Jehovah is the name of the Divine Love. (Such reverence was attached to this name by the Jews that they refrained from using it, except in special circumstances. For this reason the term "Lord" has been employed in versions of the Old Testament where Jehovah appears in the original.) These narratives are not redundant accounts of the same story. They are independent parallel records, differing in essential detail even when they seem to treat of the same subject ; and it is fatal to the integrity of the Bible to alter or re-arrange the Letter in the endeavour to secure literal accuracy or verisimilitude in one single record. They are separate external forms, complementary, perfectly adapted to express the spiritual processes involved in the spiritual development of the twin faculties of the soul.

Textual criticism may have much that is interesting to say regarding the literary and cultural equipment of the writers through whom the Letter may have been written, as well as regarding the literary form it has assumed : but it is beyond the province of literary criticism to seek to recast the Letter.¹

¹ For the assignment to the various sources, J, E, D, P, of the early Books of the Old Testament see Dr. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*.

CHAPTER VII

1. AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.
2. INSPIRATION AND INSPIRED SELECTION.
3. UNIVERSALITY OF APPEAL OF THE BIBLE.
4. THE CANON OF THE WORD.

I. AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

SIMPLE faith in the Bible as the Word of God has been accompanied by a faith as simple that all the Books of the Bible were written by those whose names they bear, or by those who have been traditionally regarded as their authors. In the case of the Books of the Old Testament this simple faith in their authorship was summed up in the Rabbinic criticism, c. A.D. 200–500, contained in the Talmudic tractate—Baba Bathra, and implicitly followed by the general body of Biblical readers till very recent times. Here is a perfectly definite statement with regard to the writing of each Book of the Old Testament : according to it Moses was the earliest and Ezra the latest of those who wrote the Scriptures. The statement is as follows :

Moses wrote his own Book (the Pentateuch), and the section about Balaam and Job. Joshua wrote his own Book, and eight verses in the Torah (the Law). Samuel wrote his own Book, and the Books of Judges and Ruth. David wrote the Book of Psalms, at the direction of the ten Elders, the first man, Melchizedek, and Abraham, and Moses, and Heman, and Jeduthun, and Asaph, and the three sons of Korah. Jeremiah wrote his own Book, and the Book of Kings and Lamentations. Hezekiah and his company wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. The men of the Great

Synagogue wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve (Minor Prophets), Daniel and the Roll of Esther. Ezra wrote his own Book and the genealogies in Chronicles down to his own time.

This statement does not conform to any continuous tradition. It is very crude criticism ; but it illustrates the unreliable nature of the grounds upon which faith in Biblical matters was based in the absence of definite knowledge concerning the text of the Bible, regarded solely as a human literary production. The attitude of scholars to the Bible has necessarily varied considerably as they weighed their progressive textual knowledge against their religious convictions, grounded, as most were, upon this simple faith. Modern criticism, utilizing the labours of devoted workers in the field of textual research, offers strong grounds for the view that such simple faith in the traditional views of Biblical authorship can no longer be upheld.

In the case of the authorship of the Pentateuch, which simple faith has always assigned to Moses, early Rabbinic criticism has raised doubt even beyond the obvious difficulty of reconciling Mosaic authorship with the fact that the closing verses of Deuteronomy record the death and burial of Moses (*Deut.*, xxxiv. 5). For in the twelfth century A.D. the distinguished Jewish scholar, Ibn Ezra, drew attention to certain passages which indicated that the non-Mosaic element in the Pentateuch was much more considerable than the earlier Rabbinic criticism had admitted.¹

The middle of the eighteenth century is generally regarded as the point at which was begun that intensive research in the Biblical text which has resulted in the almost complete disintegration of the traditional faith in the authorship of the Bible. In 1753 Jean Astruc

¹ See Gray, *Critical Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 16.

published a systematic literary analysis of Genesis and part of Exodus. This book, while maintaining the assumption of Mosaic authorship, endeavours to show that the author has drawn upon two previously existing historical narratives, one of which was characterized by the use of the Divine name Elohim (God), and the other by the use of the Hebrew proper name for God, Yahweh, Jahve, or Jehovah. Later research has extended the theory of this composite nature of Genesis to include Joshua, so that the general conclusion now is that the narrative of the Hexateuch is composite—a compilation from various sources. It should be noted that the Pentateuch itself makes no claim to be the work of Moses,¹ and in certain cases where Moses is referred to as the Law-Giver the particular enactments may well come within the spirit of the original "The Lord said unto Moses," and other references to the Pentateuch will be found to be congruent with the distinctive Mosaic character.

Apart from modern textual research the Bible itself bears witness to the existence of earlier sacred writings, some of which are either quoted or referred to in it. These writings point to a literature, not merely national but universal, whose earliest sources are derived from civilizations long anterior to the Bible's first historical personages. There is, for instance, the Law Code of Hammurabi of 2100 B.C. precursing the Covenant of Moses, c. 1300 B.C. Hammurabi was the sovereign who consolidated the Babylonian Empire, and his reign is variously dated between 2400 and 2000 B.C. Significantly enough he is represented on a piece of sculpture discovered in 1902 as having received from the sun-god the laws which he promulgated and which bear his name.

His law-code throws much light upon Babylonian social grades, industries, religion, law and family life. It is more important, however, from the fact that it embodies in late

¹ See Deut. xxxi. 24-26.

traditional form much that could only have come down from the earliest religious literature which was based upon the Ancient Word of the Most Ancient and Ancient Churches.

It contains a Flood narrative parallel to the Genesis story of our own Bible.

There are also quotations in the Bible itself from earlier books that have been lost, as the Book of Jasher (2 Samuel, i, 18, and Joshua, x. 13); and the Book of the Wars of the Lord (Numbers, xxi., 14); and we learn that there must have been an extensive literature contemporary with the Books now within the Bible whose existence is known to us only by references in the Bible itself, as the Memoirs of Shemaiah (22 Chron., xii. 15), the Book of Jehu (2 Chron., xx. 34), the Book of Iddo the Seer (2 Chron., xii. 15, and ix. 29), the Book of Nathan (2 Chron. ix. 29), and (1 Chron. xxix. 29), the Book of Gad (1 Chron. xxix. 29), and the Prophecy of Abijah the Shilonite (2 Chron. ix. 29).

2. INSPIRATION AND INSPIRED SELECTION

It would appear that the matter of inspiration is intimately bound up with the question of authorship. If Moses did not write the whole of the Pentateuch, is the whole equally inspired? A similar question may be asked with regard to most of the Books of the Bible. The person's name by which any particular Book is denoted may have been attached to a compilation extending over a period in many cases long before as well as long after the time of the reputed author. The content, however, bears somehow the peculiar quality associated with that name. If then the matter, which is traceable to various sources over a long period of time, has value owing to its own peculiar character, it would appear that the inspiration which renders it of everlasting worth resides not in the particular scribe or scribes who

compiled it : if indeed any Book of the Bible, save the Epistles, can with certainty be assigned to any particular person as its writer. He may, in fact, have been responsible for the production of little or none of it. The virtue is in the matter itself : the inspiration is in what is written, not in the nominal writer or compiler, who was guided in his work by inspired selection.

When inspiration is spoken of in connection with the Bible the fact is frequently overlooked that the Bible, in so far as it is the Word of God differs from every other literary composition in the world. The inspiration of genius which raises a literary work of man—a word of man—to a place among the Classics is the same inspiration which produces a piece of sculpture by a Michael Angelo, a painting by a Turner, a sonata by a Beethoven an electrical machine by a Kelvin. The vision of beauty or of use which the skilled artist sees is bodied forth in outer form, the creature of his own designing. His own brain conceived it : his own hands fashioned it : it is his own : he is its author. The Word of God was not so produced. No genius or series of geniuses devised it. It came, as all words come, from the mind of its Author, whether announced by some such declaration as : Thus saith the Lord, or unannounced in the historical narrative, prophecy, poetry, or apocalyptic vision. As one writer says :

“ It has often come under men’s low moral outlook, and been grasped in the terms of it ; or under the demands of a sense-impression of truth ; it was conformed to the genius of the Old Testament people ; and at all times it has been delivered up to the conceptions of our time and space consciousness in this world. Between God’s mind and this ultimate rendering of the Word in Scripture there must be an infinity of truth.”—*The World Within the Bible*, p. 14. W. F. Wunsch.

It is this infinity of truth within the Letter of the Word which is the inspiration of the Word, and its inspiration is felt as the Divine Truth within the Letter is appreciated. At the best, the actual penmen of the Bible were guided by inspired selection, from literary sources available to them, or from their own experience. What is involved in this phrase—inspired selection—may be understood from the following statement by an authoritative writer:

“ It was the function of inspiration to guide the individual writer in the choice and disposition of his material, and in his use of it, for the inculcation of special lessons.”—Introduction to *The Literature Of The Old Testament*, Intro. p. 17. Dr. Driver.

It is eminently true of the Bible—*Nihil est in scripto quod non prius in auctore.* (There is nothing in what is written which was not first in the mind of the author.) The content of the Bible is apprehended only as the mind of the author is ascertained. Biblical research, while emphasizing the composite nature of the Bible and its several Books, renders more and more remote the possibility of determining any writer or compiler as the author of any particular Book. The external literary form everywhere lacks the homogeneity and unity that characterize ordinary literary compositions. In the case of the early writers, they have evidently been compilers from original sources whose ultimate author, working from a definite plan upon which the Scriptures have been built up and maintained intact against all undermining influences, is not to be discovered by purely literary criteria.

3. UNIVERSALITY OF APPEAL

While modern criticism has effectively disposed of the old traditional views of Biblical authorship, and widened the field from which the various Books have

apparently drawn their material, it has failed to show wherein the universality of the Bible consists. It has been content to follow the line indicated by the view of Jean Astruc, and has concerned itself with research into the literary sources and linguistic structure of the Books—a very necessary and instructive study. That another and more interior avenue of approach to Biblical study is possible was shown in a work—*Arcana Caelestia*—published by Eman. Swedenborg¹ five years before Astruc's book appeared. In this work Swedenborg discloses the real inwardness of the Bible and the manner of its composition. The Bible conveys the Word of God to man, who is a spiritual as well as a natural being. It is not intended to teach him myth, history, science, poetry or philosophy. These branches of natural knowledge he can explore and build up for himself, guided by his own natural intelligence ; nor does its greatness depend upon the grandeur of its poetic passages or upon the literary excellence of its diction.

Although man as a natural being, living in a natural world, does learn much from a literary study of the Bible, yet it is man the spiritual being whom it is intended to reach ; and until the inner spiritual content of the Bible has appealed to his spiritual nature the Bible has not yet performed its mission. The universality of the Bible resides in its spiritual appeal, not to men here or there, but to all mankind ; and much that appears to be lovely or unlovely, personal or fanciful, even trivial or redundant in its composition is due to this fact. There is no phase in man's spiritual nature, infinite in its variety and eternal in its development that does not find in the Bible its correction if evil and its stimulus if good. Thus what Biblical scholars have regarded as the apparently fortuitous combination of two narratives in the early Books, distinguished as the Elohist and the Jahvist, is

¹ See Appendix III., p. 60.

due to the necessity for the appeal to be made to different spiritual qualities in man, or to men of different predominant spiritual characteristics.

4. THE CANON OF THE WORD

It was undoubtedly an achievement of modern Biblical study, by using the ordinary methods of literary research, to discover that the habits of thought, traditional practices and stylistic characteristics of Northern Israel on the one hand and those of Judah on the other are perpetuated in the so-called Elohist and Jahvist narratives respectively. Swedenborg had already shown why these narratives, never intended to be regarded as separate but interdependent and complementary, were thus incorporated in the Bible as the necessary basis upon which the Divine Author could rest His Word. That Word, the lowest ultimate expression of Himself as Divine Love and Divine Wisdom in practically every known language of the world, is comprised within the collection of literature to which the name Bible has been given, and which by universal consent is reckoned sacred above all books. While the Bible, however, is rightly so regarded, all that constitutes the canon of the Sacred Scriptures as included in the Authorized Version, with which may be incorporated the Apocryphal books, does not possess the peculiar virtue which belongs to the Word alone.

Documentary research has not enabled students of the Bible to say with any degree of certainty why some Books should exert a deeper spiritual influence than others. When Paul addressed to Timothy his Epistle in A.D. 66 affirming that

“ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in spiritual things.” —(2 Tim. iii. 16.)

Scripture in the strict sense of the term meant the Hebrew Scriptures. He could not have foreseen that his own Epistles would be included as Holy Scripture with the Hebrew Scriptures,¹ alongside of which Apocryphal books were frequently placed on equality: and Paul's statement is generally regarded as having application to Scripture in its more extended meaning, now covering the modern versions of the Bible, although some sections of the Christian Church have rightly excluded certain Books as not being authoritative in matters of doctrine.

While it has been noted by scholars in a more or less indeterminable manner that there is a difference in the character of certain Books in the Bible, they have been unaware of the real nature of the difference. It has been put down by some to the minds of the writers being illumined in different degrees² by the Spirit of God. So Dr. Driver in the Preface to *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 16, Note 1, writes :

“ I say (the minds of the writers are illumined) in different degrees ; for no one would attribute to the authors of some of the Proverbs, or of the Books of Esther or Ecclesiastes, the same degree of spiritual perception displayed, e.g. in Isa. xl.-lxvi. or in the Psalms.”

and Note 2 :

“ So for instance, Riehm, speaking of the Pentateuch as a record of revelation, remarks on the ‘immediate impression’ of this character which it makes, and continues : ‘ Every man who so reads the Pentateuch as to allow its contents to work

¹ See 2 Peter iii. 16; and *Introduction to New Testament*, II., p. 542. Davidson.

² See also Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*. Vol. I., p. 5.

upon his spirit, must receive the impression that a consciousness of God such as is here expressed cannot be derived from flesh and blood.' "

The difference that stamps the Word as distinctive from the other sacred Books in the Bible is the presence within its Letter of a spiritual content—of that infinity of truth which is at once its inspiration and its Divinity. The Books which possess this spiritual content—a thing apart from the inspiration of the Books of purely human authorship—and which therefore are the Word, are : the five Books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, two Books of Samuel, two Books of Kings, Psalms of David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi ; and in the New Testament : the four Evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John—and the Apocalypse.

These Books form for the New Church the Canon of the Word, as distinguished from the major Canon of the Bible, in which are included all the Books of the Authorized Version.¹

In thus defining what Books constitute the Word there is no depreciation of the other Books included in the Bible. These still remain as Paul described the Scripture of his day, valuable as ever they were to the Christian, serving as an introduction to the religious life, and in helping to build up that life in members of the Church. Upon the Word alone, however, as a basis all truth ultimately rests ; and from it alone all doctrine or Divine teaching must be drawn, for its Letter alone is the medium through which He who is Truth itself conveys His mind to man.

¹ As the main purpose of the present writer is concerned with the Divinity of the Word, details of the Books of the Bible outwith the Word, are not presented.

APPENDIX III

Emanuel Swedenborg.

Emanuel Swedenborg was born in 1688 when his father, Jesper Swedberg, was chaplain to the Court of Charles XI. of Sweden. The name was changed to Swedenborg when the family was ennobled by the Queen of Sweden in 1719.

His father was a distinguished theological scholar, and remarkable for his zeal in translating his faith into the practical works of everyday life. In 1694 he was appointed Dean of Upsala, and Bishop of Skara in 1702, an office he held till his death in 1735.

Swedenborg devoted his early life to the study of science with such success that he was invited to apply for the professorship of higher mathematics in the university of Upsala in 1724. He declined the offer as he preferred to undertake special research work in metallurgy with a view to the economic development of the mineral wealth of Sweden. But all science was his province ; and by 1743 he had published two important scientific works, *The Principia, or First Principles of Natural Things* and *The Animal Kingdom*.

These works not only mark the limits of scientific attainment of that time, but they also indicate notable advances and foreshadowed subsequent discoveries. They are, moreover, not merely descriptive in their nature. They are a sustained effort towards a philosophic explanation of the world of nature. Causes and origins were a devout obsession with him ; and when in 1743 the opportunity came to him to see and understand these, he was ready to embrace it. He sacrificed all his inclinations, hopes and plans in the field of scientific achievement and speculative thought and responded to the Divine call to make the spiritual his province, and to bring down to ordinary comprehension the spiritual realities that underlie all nature and the spiritual principles that actuate human life.

Instead of the book of nature the Bible became his textbook, and the system of theology which is the body of doctrine for the New Church is wholly derived from the Word. Swedenborg in his books, particularly in *The Arcana Caelestia*,

The Apocalypse Revealed and *The True Christian Religion*, describes the establishment of this Church and formulates its theological system ; but although he lived till 1772 he founded no sect and originated no cult.

The organized New Church has been formed of those who desire to worship according to the principles of revealed spiritual truth, without reservations. This truth, however, cuts across all modern intellectual life. It is permeating scientific, literary, philosophic and also religious thought ; and many do not deem its acceptance incompatible with membership of other Christian denominations, provided only that these acknowledge as the core of their religious life the Divinity of the Lord and the Divinity of the Word.

CHAPTER VIII

DIVINE AUTHORSHIP

1. LIFE THE SIGN OF DIVINE CREATION.
2. SPIRIT THE CRITERION OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP.
3. THE PARABOLIC NATURE OF THE WORD.

I. LIFE THE SIGN OF DIVINE CREATION

GOD creates: man makes up or re-fashions what he finds to hand. God creates the speck of dust, the precious stone, the mountain and the valley; the drop of water, the river, the ocean; the seed, the field of corn, the tree, the forest; the protoplasm, the fish, the creeping thing, the mammal, man.

Man, impelled by love or desire to fashion something of use or beauty, forms a mental image, an idea, of what he wants. Utilizing the various forms of matter accessible to him, he employs his own hands or those of others whom he may call to his aid, to cause his idea to take material form, representing more or less accurately his ideal, be it a stone axe, a watch, a statue or a motor-car. Wherein lies the difference between what God creates and what man makes? Donatello realized in the course of time what the inspired eyes of the master critic had detected as lacking in his great statue. All God's creation has that one thing—life, adapted to the form of the recipient. Every created object and every activity of nature represent some idea in the thought of God, the ultimation of some Divine desire to make a universe fit for man to live in. And so, beyond natural thought, which is the innermost stage in man's efforts at making things and in making things go, extend spiritual planes to Life itself, the infinite Love and Wisdom which ultimate in the material universe and keep it in being by the continuous inflow of life.

In writing, that is of human authorship, the word represents an idea, the sentence a thought ; and the whole meaning of an author is understood when his words convey his thoughts to his readers. These two—words and thoughts—are on different planes, words on the outer material plane and thoughts on the inner mental plane. These planes are discrete, the one never merging into the other. Of the same inner nature as thought is love, affection, or desire, and this always precedes and is the urge or motive which causes man to draw from his memory the necessary material to frame his thought-forms from which speech may proceed.

Writing that is of human authorship has exhausted its purpose when the words used have conveyed to their readers the meaning usually associated with these words. The Letter of the Word bears on its surface the meaning the words usually convey—the whole meaning were the Letter of human authorship. It carries within it, however, that inner meaning for the spiritual life which the Divine Author intended it should contain when He provided for its ultimate expression in the written Word.

The writers of the Word were not the authors of what they wrote. They were men of ripened spiritual intuition and experience, and scholars of adequate knowledge not only of their nation's history and religion but also of contemporary myth and literature. From this experience and knowledge were attracted into their consciousness by Divine influence acting as a magnet those elements which would best serve to convey the Divine Word to man. The writers' function was to give expression to this material in their own language ; and thus each Book in the Letter of the Word has reached its ultimate form in the world.

The worth of the inner content—the Divine message beyond the natural thought conveyed by the Letter—does not depend on the truth, credibility or even morality

of what is recorded in the Letter. The qualities expressed in the Letter have their own part to play in the activities of human life. They are the only qualities that are understood by the lowest orders of men. The sense that lies within the Letter is not affected by the literal truth or otherwise of the literal record : it makes no claim for literal infallibility. Its Divine content is unimpaired by the apparent historical inaccuracies, paradoxes, scientific impossibilities and unfulfilled prophecies of the Letter. These, no matter how they appealed to the original writers, or indeed to readers of later date, are the inevitable outer form of the Divine Truth, adapted not only to the genius of the original writers, who wrote as of themselves, but also to the universal comprehension of men for all succeeding ages. The linguistic imperfections of the Letter, which it is the duty of Biblical scholarship to remove, are due to the human element in transcription and translation.

It is a necessary corollary of Divine Authorship that the actual writers should remain unknown or unacknowledged. They may have imagined that the work was their own ; and had they left incontestable proof that their hand had penned the Letter, subsequent readers would have had greater difficulty in looking beyond the actual writers of the Letter, whose thought did not necessarily extend beyond the literal meaning, to the real Author.

2. SPIRIT THE CRITERION OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP

What is the criterion of Divine Authorship ? How does Divine Authorship differ from human ? In the same way as the objects of Divine creation differ from the objects made by man. The Lord Himself declares the difference :

“ The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.”—John vi. 63.

whether they are the Word of the Old Testament or the Word of the New. The Divine Word in speech or writing has within it spiritual life, not merely the meaning that ordinary human language conveys. Resting on the basis of the Letter of the Word there extend far beyond the natural thought which the literal sense conveys to the ordinary reader spiritual senses reaching past the intellectual apprehension of man up to the Divine Wisdom Itself, halting as it were on the various planes of spiritual life to serve the angels as the light of their life :

“ Thy word O Lord is settled in the heavens.”—
Ps. cxix. 89.

While man is still in the natural world, unconscious for the most part of his spiritual nature and its faculties, it is, of course, quite impossible for him to appreciate at all deeply the spiritual content of the Word. Nevertheless it has always been believed that the Word contains more than is merely indicated in the Letter ; and many have endeavoured to discover its hidden wisdom. Their efforts have been mainly directed towards discovering an allegorical meaning within the Letter, but allegory—and no one has ever shown a consistent allegorical meaning within the Word—would not be spirit. It would be simply a human interpretation forced upon the Letter, varying in value with the richness of the imagination of the interpreter.

3. THE PARABOLIC NATURE OF THE WORD

Although it is impossible for man to enter very deeply into the spiritual content of the Word yet it is possible to understand an inner spiritual sense which lies within the grasp of his intellectual comprehension. That inner sense lies very close to the Letter in many places,

illuminating the literal record with flashes of spiritual light, as when water is used to indicate the cleansing or refreshing quality of truth ; and seed is used to represent truth in another of its functions. Thus in the parable of the Sower we are shown the working of the Lord Himself in disseminating the truths of His Word as a means of leading to the good of life. The Sower, the seed, the ground, the birds, the thorns—simple natural objects and actions associated with them are used to represent things of the spirit and the inner spiritual life of the hearers of the Word.

The parables of the New Testament constitute a most important part of the teaching of our Lord : they are the simplest and most memorable form that teaching could take. But all our Lord's teaching is parabolic. Just prior to His arrest at Gethsemane the Lord said, referring to His conversation with His disciples :

“ These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs.”—(Marg. parables) John xvi. 25.

but in Matt. xiii. 34–35, it is written :

“ All things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables ; and without a parable spake He not unto them, That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, I will open my mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.”

What was spoken by the prophet is given by the Psalmist in Psalm lxxviii, where he says :

“ Give ear, O my people, to my law, incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable : I will utter dark sayings of old ; which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.”—v. 1–3.

The "parable" that follows is none other than a summary of the history of the Jewish people from the time of their deliverance out of Egypt to the choice of David to be their Leader.

In the light of the testimony of the Word to its own nature what is the evident significance of the statement in Matthew :

"Without a parable spake He not unto them?"

It is no less than a declaration of the distinguishing feature of Divine Authorship. All that the Lord speaks, not merely what is cast in the literary form of parable, but all the Word of the Lord of the Old Testament as well as of the New, is marked by this Divine characteristic which no human authorship can claim—an internal spiritual sense, spirit and life, directly applicable to the spiritual nature of man and concerned only with things of the spirit.

CHAPTER IX

CORRESPONDENCE AND CONTINUITY

1. CORRESPONDENCE : THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND THE NATURAL.
2. THE WORD WITH THE FIVE CHURCHES.
 - (1) The Ancient Word : The Adamic Church.
 - (2) The Ancient Word : The Noatic Church.
 - (3) The Word of the Old Testament : The Jewish Church.
 - (4) The Word of the Old and the New Testament : The Christian Church.
 - (5) The Revelation of the Spiritual Content : The New Jerusalem Church—The New (Christian) Church.

I. CORRESPONDENCE : THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND THE NATURAL

IN His conversation at the Well of Jacob the Lord wrought a wonderful change in the mind of the woman of Samaria [John iv. 5, 6]. From the ordinary natural idea of water with its refreshing and cleansing properties she rose to the spiritual conception of that water offered by the Lord, Divine Truth which would relieve her soul for ever from the pangs of spiritual thirst. The relation between the two, water and truth, was always there ; but to people now so sunk in external living that the life of the spirit was practically dead, water was water and nothing more. The Lord, however, by the magic of His persuasive conversation with the woman has induced the world to realize that there is a spiritual nature that requires spiritual water, and that in His Word that water is truth. The correspondence between water and truth is neither accidental nor arbitrary : it is inherent and inevitable. Water and truth are identical in function, each in its own sphere, and this identity of function in things natural and things spiritual is the essence of correspondence.

As with water so with every natural object and natural activity in the outer world. All have their counterparts in the spiritual world within. According to the order of creation what is external or material was produced from what is internal or spiritual. As is quaintly suggested by Plato (*Republic* vii.), the external is the shadow of the internal, or the internal is the world of the real, to the understanding of which all study should be directed.

Within our own limited experience we see emotions—things of the mind—produce smiles on the countenance. We see also motives produce actions, and we see thoughts resulting in words. By observing the outward or natural results we can deduce the inner mental or spiritual causes that produce these effects. As our spiritual experience widens and our knowledge of the material world increases, the causal connection between the spiritual and the natural becomes more and more apparent. It becomes more and more evident not only that the activity of the natural from moment to moment depends upon the continuous urge of the spiritual but also that the cessation of the spiritual even momentarily would mean stagnation and death to the natural. This is only the normal order of Creation—first the spiritual and then the natural. It was thus that the natural world appeared: the mineral, the vegetable and the animal kingdom crowned by man, the macrocosm of Creation epitomized in the microcosm of man, appeared to body forth the mind of the Creator.

Had man remained in the primal state in which he was created he would have retained the power with which he was endowed of reading in the objects of nature the spiritual realities whose shadows they are and which are the causes of their very existence. He would have continued to see, as primal men saw, the varying but comprehensive aspects of the Divine Goodness and the

multitudinous principles of the Divine Truth imaged in the countless objects and activities of the world of nature. Thus the firmament, the sun, moon and stars, the clouds, the rain, the rainbow, the land with mountain, hill and valley, fertile field and wilderness, the water in all its variety of ocean and river, and all the operations of the material universe—all were the reflection of some quality or activity in their inner life, all had their counterpart in the spiritual world within. For, as man was created in the image and likeness of God, the outer material world was to men a mirror of their spiritual nature also. When they beheld the objects of the outer world they thought of them not only naturally but also spiritually. Their life was in accordance with the knowledge that

“The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.”—Rom. i. 20.

They realized that their reaction to the world of nature was reflected in spiritual life, so that their use and enjoyment of the things of the world were regulated with due regard to their spiritual welfare.

When the need arose for them to converse with one another by means of language as an external medium of communication and instruction their speech was based on the name-words given to the objects of nature and to the operations accompanying their use. When they employed speech, however, they always perceived the spiritual significance of the words as well as their immediate natural meaning, using the language of concrete things to convey spiritual ideas. Thus earliest literature, whether in the form of narrative, fable or poetry, was correspondential, using language in which the obvious natural meaning was entirely subordinated to the more vital purposes of spiritual instruction and edification.

With the subsequent decline from the lofty spiritual state in which men first lived, the spontaneous perception of the spiritual within the written speech was lost ; but ere it quite vanished the knowledge of how things of the spirit could be conveyed by means of vocal or written speech was handed down to posterity by those who enjoyed it last, as something to be learned by intellectual study instead of by immediate perception. In this way a knowledge of the correspondential use of language became widely known to many ancient peoples of the East, and was extensively cultivated as one of their principal sciences, although the spiritual worship which it had first served had now given place to many forms of idolatry and polytheism. It may be seen, although now much corrupted, in the highly poetic form of the earliest remains of the literatures of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Arabia, Canaan, and Tyre and Sidon, whence it passed to Europe, and in its most degenerate form it permeates the Mythology of the Classics. Thus Mythology is not the cradle or source of modern philosophies and religious systems but the last expression in beauty of literature and plastic art of the long lost science of correspondences and the spiritual life of those who first employed it.

How long the period lasted during which primal men lived in the enjoyment of spiritual perception cannot even be conjectured. For while the spiritual history and progress of mankind are plainly recorded in the Bible it is not till the time of Abram that the time element enters into the story. Prior to that the record is non-historical : it treats only of the inner world of the spirit, and into that life the purely natural ideas of time and place do not enter. What is of importance is the nature of the spiritual life men led in relation to the highest religious principles known to them ; and up to the time of the call of Abram mankind had passed through two

main stages each marked by decline. However much men may have advanced in the arts of civilization on the material plane yet from the point of view of spiritual values there was decadence not progress.

2. THE WORD WITH THE FIVE CHURCHES

The earliest stage of our first ancestors was the Eden state of mankind, when God walked in the Garden and talked with men. As long as they remained in this pristine idyllic state, there was no need of a written Word : the Law was in their heart : their religion was the religion of love. Their name was Adam, the earliest word for man, forming the first religious community, known as the Most Ancient Church or the Adamic Church.

The term Church is used here with two broad and general significations. First, it means the revelation to men of God and His Divine principles of right living and right thinking, as this revelation finds ultimate expression in a form of His Word, adapted to the genius of men to whom it is made ; and second, it means a religious community in whose hearts these principles are cherished and in whose minds they are rooted as the ruling principles of their lives. Thus it means God's presence in the world as well as men in whom God finds a dwelling-place. It does not mean a building or an external organization, although such outer forms may well serve as a "local habitation and a name" for the internal spiritual reality. In the religious history of mankind there are five such revelations or churches, and to each of these an appropriate form or understanding of the Word has been granted. These Dispensations are known as the Adamic Church, the Noatic Church, the Jewish Church, the Christian Church, and the New Jerusalem or simply the New Christian Church.

(1) The Ancient Word. The Adamic Church

There are extant no historical records of the two first phases of human existence. Some day perhaps when a new orientation is made of research in geology and anthropology something of that early history may be wrested from the rocks. There is, however, in existence from these earliest times in the Bible story itself, when its real meaning is understood, a complete description of the first Church's lofty spiritual state, with a detailed record of their decline and fall, figured through the line of Adam's descendants, to become a people dead to the dictates of the things of the spirit and wholly immersed in the soul-destroying life of the world. In the story of the Flood is pictured in catastrophic fashion the consummation of the Adamic Church; but its end was neither so sudden nor so dramatic as the literal record portrays. The first indication that decline had set in is conveyed in the remarkably significant statement:

“And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone.”—Gen. ii. 18.

Up to this point the Adamic Church had lived alone—all one—with God. Now they desired to live their own life, and from the time they turned from God to themselves and the world their progress downward was gradual but sure; and the Flood is a fitting picture of the spiritual degradation into which they fell.

(2) The Ancient Word : The Noatic Church

There is also the record of how from the wreckage, as it were, of that early Church a new religious community arose that retained in their life as lofty an appreciation of the Divine principles as was possible for them, considering the low level to which men had sunk. Under

the figure of Noah and his descendants this Church, the Ancient Church, passed to its decline and fall through similar experiences. The final phase of the Ancient Church is represented by the birth of Heber, from whom the name Hebrew is derived. He appeared at the dawn of history and from him the church acquired such a distinctive character as might warrant this phase being described as the second Ancient Church.

This church was principled, in general, in the faith and life of the Ancient Church, but it was distinguished by its use of the term Jehovah as the name by which it knew God, and by the offering of sacrifices. This mode of worship spread widely amongst the Gentile races, and descended to Abraham, and his posterity.¹ It was owing to the decline of the Adamic Church that writing was introduced in order that men in their decadence might have an outward concrete medium to convey to them the Divine Word with its warning and its instruction in righteousness.

It was with this purpose in view that the Ancient Word was begun, written in the correspondential style of the Adamic people. As the original spontaneous perception of spiritual truth was lost, the laws of Divine order had now to be learned by the outward method of reading these laws in an external written form. Their religion was now based on the intellectual appreciation of the Word, and its correspondential system was their chief intellectual study.

This people settled in Canaan whither they had journeyed on their migration from the first home of mankind in Central Asia. The language of the Ancient Word therefore, which attained its completest form in Canaan, contains elements from the pure correspondential language of the first Church, including proper names and names of geographical features which are now untraceable,

¹ See *Arcana Caelestia* 1343.

as well as words referring to peoples, tribes and places, both within and without the land of Canaan known to early Noatic men which later passed out of common knowledge. Such words, although they have lost their literal significance, retain their place in the Word because they form part of the abiding structure upon which rests the spiritual correspondence of the Word.

The Noatic Church did not remain on the comparatively high spiritual level on which it began. As was the case with the preceding Church, evils of life and false ideas crept in and obtained such a mastery over the people that they could no longer serve as the custodians on earth of the Divine principles of Goodness and Truth. To such depths did they fall that not only was national unity lost but also the knowledge of the relation between things spiritual and natural. Broken and dispersed among the surrounding nations, they brought to these nations the Ancient Word as it had been developed with them, but not a full appreciation of its spiritual content. A true knowledge of the Deity and His attributes was in danger of being entirely lost in the rising growth of idolatry and polytheism.

(3) *The Old Testament : The Jewish Church*

A new Church had to be formed, and Abram was called from the idolatry of Chaldea to found a nation which should perform the functions of a Church and keep alive as its principal religious idea the Unity of the Godhead. When the Word came to be written for the descendants of Abram—the Jewish Church—its first five Books, known as the Pentateuch, incorporated the essential portions of the Ancient Word. Many of these are in scattered fragments as quotations or references, but the most important portion is that with which the Pentateuch begins, the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

The history of the Jewish Church, like that of the two preceding Churches, is one of continuous decline, from the rule of the Patriarchs through that of the Judges and Kings. The religion of this Church, however, was a matter of externals only. Not only had men completely lost all knowledge of the relation between the internal spiritual world and the external natural world, but they also had no idea of the spiritual significance underlying their acts of worship. These were performed not from the appreciation of any consequence in their spiritual life but merely as if the whole merit of the performance lay in the meticulous observance of the ceremonial rites : for such was the genius of the people to whom was now entrusted the ultimate presence of the Lord among men. Dead to all spirituality they nevertheless could and scrupulously did observe what was represented to them as their duty in regard to an external ritual. Thus a form of religion was developed among them the spiritual content of which they did not understand. They only understood that terrible penalties would follow any transgression of the Law : and the Jews were chosen to receive the lowest form the Word could assume in the world not because they surpassed other nations in number or in virtue, but because they could most faithfully preserve to the last jot and tittle the Word in an external form.

The Word was gradually unfolded to them in a literal form adapted to their peculiar genius, but corresponding in all its detail to the interior truth which was its spirit and life ; and extraordinary stress was laid on the strict observance of ritual, for otherwise there would be violation of the inner spiritual content. This Word was continued through a long line of Prophets and sacred writers till the Old Testament was completed, comprising in addition to the Word a fringe of apocryphal and quasi-sacred writings, which served both as a protection to the

Divine Books themselves and as a means of approach to them. The Old Testament embodies in outer form all the Divine Truth revealed to men from earliest times as essential for their spiritual as well as for their natural life. The form, however, in which the Truth is there presented is unsuited to people of higher religious feelings and deeper spiritual comprehension. The early Christians, in whom was awakened the reality of the spiritual, perceived that the literal performance of the Ceremonial Law was of little avail in living the truly religious life. Observance of the Ceremonial Law was for the salvation of men dead to all spiritual life, who maintained, as it were, their communion with God by blind obedience to literal ritual enjoined by Him, although its real significance was wholly unknown to them. In the Old Testament the Word is brought down to minister to the lowest state of life to which the term religious can be applied.

(4) *The Old and New Testaments : The Christian Church*

For many years the Hebrew Bible remained the Sacred Scriptures of the Christians, who perceived, though vaguely, that there was a spirit within them which was worthy of their studious search. The life and teaching of our Lord, however, were now the inspiration of the new age that followed the consummation of the Jewish Church. A new literature, apparently fortuitous, grew up, not to supersede but to supplement the Hebrew Bible as the Sacred Scriptures, and the Word assumed a new and final aspect as the crowning glory of the world's literature when the Books of the New Testament appeared. As in the case of the Old Testament the New Testament as we now have it in the Authorized Version includes sacred writings of value to the religious life, namely the Acts and the Epistles, serving as a protection and as a supplement to the Books of the Word itself—the Gospels

and the Apocalypse. These—the Gospels and the Apocalypse—are written, as the Word has always been, in the correspondential style which betokens Divine Authorship, as distinguished from the authorship of human writers.

(5) *The Revelation of the Spiritual Content : The New Jerusalem Church—The New (Christian) Church*

Within 150 years of the publication of the Authorized Version of the Bible there appeared a series of works by Emanuel Swedenborg on the nature of the spiritual, including one called *The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture*, which has completely revolutionized our ideas of the Bible. Never has greater homage been paid to the literary beauty and grandeur of the Bible than in our day, but never have there been more scathing attacks on the natural or literal form as the outward manifestation of the Divine. These attacks are symptomatic of the age, for even where organizations, commonly regarded as part of the Church, hold nominal sway, the sole Divinity of our Lord and the Divinity of His Word are denied. The spiritual life which the advent of our Lord revealed to those with whom He established His first Christian Church has ebbed, giving place to the cold though brilliant intellectual life of materialism. This, repeating the cycle of the ages, has spread like a miasma over the religious world and has led to a general denial that the Divine has visited the world in person and has given the world His Word. With the failure of the Christian Church to maintain the spiritual perception which the early Christians enjoyed and to proclaim the Truth of the Word, the time has come for John's vision city of the New Jerusalem to descend into the hearts and minds of men, for a new Christian Church to be established in which there shall be the acknowledgment of the Divinity of our Lord and a true knowledge of the

Word. In the writings of Swedenborg there are described how this New Church—the fifth and final in the world's history—has been founded, and how the real nature of the Bible has been revealed, thus rendering possible a spiritual appreciation of the Word.

CHAPTER X

NATURE OF THE INNER SENSE

1. THE NATURE OF THE INNER SENSE.
2. ITS THREE-FOLD APPLICATION.
 - To God : The Celestial Sense.
 - To Man : The Spiritual Sense.
 - To the Church : The Historical Sense.
3. THE FIRST BIBLE : THE ANCIENT WORD : GENESIS, CH. I.-XI.
4. THE ANCIENT WORD: SECTION I. GENESIS, CH. I.-VI., v. 8.
THE MOST ANCIENT OR ADAMIC CHURCH.
 - (1) The First Creation Story : the Work of Seven Days, Ch. I.-II., v. 3.
 - (2) The Second Creation Story : Ch. II., v. 4-7.
 - (3) Life in Eden : Ch. II.-III.
 - (4) Decline of the Most Ancient Church : Ch. IV.-VI., v. 8.

I. THE NATURE OF THE INNER SENSE

ON the road to Emmaus our risen Lord wakened the spiritual consciousness of the two disciples to whom the Crucifixion had brought blank disappointment. Luke's Gospel relates that as they journeyed they were joined by one whom they failed to recognize, but who rebuked them for being slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets had spoken :

“ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”—Luke xxiv. 27.

Not until they had persuaded Him to tarry with them did they recognize their Companion in the breaking of bread,

“ And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him.”—v. 31.

Their spiritual faculties were roused to activity. A plane of being, potential in all men, became actual for

them. They and the other disciples they joined in Jerusalem were, for the time being, living the dual life of spiritual as well as natural men in the natural world. They enjoyed spiritual perception as well as their natural faculties, and their hearts burned within them as our Lord opened to them the Scriptures. They realized that the Scriptures have an inner sense, and that the Word in its inmost application treats of the Lord Himself ; and when the time came for the Gospels to be written it was recorded in four-fold¹ form by disciples who from their interior perception of the spiritual course of the Lord's life were enabled, under Divine direction, to express it in outer story or fable, which conveys so much, or so little, to the Bible reader.

2. ITS THREE-FOLD APPLICATION

In correspondential style in the Letter of the Word there is described the course of development of the Lord's inner life by which was achieved the Glorification of His Humanity, when He fulfilled the Scriptures in accomplishing His work in the world. He fulfilled more than an occasional prediction, such as that He would be born in Bethlehem. Rather He lived out the Word's ideal of human life, as it is written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Himself (Luke xxiv. 44.). Thus the Historical Books of the Word, the Prophetical Books and the Lyrical Books, as the Lord Himself taught, as well as the Gospel narratives and the Apocalypse, as these Books themselves plainly show, are all the record of that Divinely human life in their inmost or celestial sense.²

The Word, however, is the Book of the development of the human soul as well as of the Divine Life. Man was

¹ See Ch. XX. on the *Four-fold Nature of the Gospel*.

² See *A Life of Jesus Little Known*. Rev. William Worcester.

created in the Divine image and likeness, and as the Lord glorified His Human and united it to the Father, or became one with the Father, so man must be born again. He must rise from the natural life of this world into the spiritual life, which he can enter only by regeneration. Man must do this by following in his own finite way the Divine steps traced out for him in the Word, and that sense of the Word which has its application to the man of the Church, is its relative or spiritual sense, no less continuous and complete for all the stages of his spiritual development than the celestial sense in relation to the Divine. Men have always looked to the Word and have more or less clearly seen in it their spiritual states, and directions for their guidance. As the Psalmist declares :

“ Thine eyes saw the sum total of my days,
And in thy book they were all written ;
They were formed, when there was not one
among them.”

Ps. cxxxix. 16 (Amer. Trans. quoted, *The World Within the Bible*, p. 47).

In addition to those two senses of the Word there is another application, in many places much more apparent and direct. It is a sense which has more a racial than an individual reference, but yet the other references can readily be discerned. It describes the spiritual life and progress of man in general, where the spiritual condition of the Church in the world rather than that of persons or even of nations is the subject treated, and figured in the Letter by individual or national names, as Israel, or the Jewish nation. When the immediate reference has this universal application the sense is distinguished as the historical spiritual sense.

It is to be noted that the term “ spiritual ” is sufficient to distinguish all these deeper senses from the superficial

sense of the Letter, which is not abrogated by them. It is rather given a new value as the ultimate foundation on which the spiritual rests. No difficulty any longer arises from its apparent imperfections—paradoxes, contradictions, and even errors. These are seen in due course to justify their place in the Word as the only adequate form in which the spiritual can be literally expressed.

Belief in the inerrancy of the Letter is not hurtful to those who believe in simple sincerity, and who live in charity towards the Lord and the neighbour. There is ample truth leading to eternal life apparent in the Letter to be perceived by all who are so disposed. They do not discard what is unintelligible at the moment, and as their spiritual knowledge increases with their simple faith, the difficulties of the Letter are resolved and their grasp of the Word strengthens with an ever-expanding understanding of its internal content.

Thus there extend through the Word from Genesis to Revelation in the deeper sense the three planes relating to the Lord, to man, and to the Church, linking together all the Books with an indissoluble bond of spiritual vitality. When, therefore, we seek to discover some measure of the inner sense in its reference to one or other of these subjects we do so with the conviction that we are but touching the fringe of the spiritual ; for while man's intellect is indefinitely expansive it may reach towards but can never grasp the full knowledge of the Infinite.

3. THE FIRST BIBLE : THE ANCIENT WORD— GENESIS I.—XI.

The first Bible was the Ancient Word ; but it is not known what were the actual contents of that Word. We know that those portions essential to the spiritual needs of man are incorporated in our Bible, and consist of the

non-historical chapters of Genesis, with quotations in certain other Books, as Numbers, Joshua, Samuel and Chronicles.¹ These early chapters of Genesis are written in the style peculiar to primeval man, in narrative form, apparently historical, but having no reference to actual facts. Being men of a spiritual genius, at first potential but later actual, they communicated to one another spiritual ideas but expressed in the form of natural language. What is now extant of the Ancient Word has been preserved by the Divine Providence in keeping with the Divine plan of giving the Word to man according to his spiritual needs, in whatever period of time he may be placed, to guide him in his decline and to lead him in his upward progress as a spiritual being.

The first Bible is divided into two sections, and its relation may be sketched of the spiritual experiences of man, both collectively and individually, as he lived throughout the course of the first two Churches in the world's religious history, namely, the Most Ancient Church, described from Ch. i. to verse 8 of Ch. vi., and the Ancient Church, described from verse 9 of Ch. vi. to the end of Ch. xi. in Genesis.

4. THE ANCIENT WORD : SECTION I. CH. I. TO CH. VI. 8. THE MOST ANCIENT OR ADAMIC CHURCH

(I) *The First Creation story : the work of seven days.* Ch. i.-ii. 3

Gen. i. The attainment of the spiritual plane. The first section begins by recording the spiritual progress of man from the primal, simple state in which he was created to the full realization of the spiritual plane, when he is able to enter upon the celestial, the highest plane attainable by man. These states are both potential in man at

¹ See Ch. vii., p. 53 and Ch. ix., p. 75.

creation, and have always been man's inalienable birth-right. The various stages in this progress are represented by the six days of Creation.

The Bible opens with man ages after his appearance on this earth. He is nobler in form and feature than the animal, with intellectual faculties of understanding and will betokening a plane of existence immeasurably higher than the highest animal can reach.¹ The whole field of natural knowledge was open to his research and the whole range of moral values within his grasp. Life was pleasant and death was an easy transition to the freer and fuller eternal life of the soul. But the Divine purpose had a higher destiny in view for man. Man has always had endowments that point to a higher plane of life than could be satisfied by merely acquiring knowledge of the world of nature and theorizing upon it, and by living the merely moral life of good companionship. This might be enough were man only a superior animal : but he is more. He was so created that he can enter into reciprocal relations with the Divine Love that called him into existence, and the Bible's first care is to teach man how to progress beyond the merely natural life into which he is born. It shows first how he may reach that deeper interior life—the spiritual—when man does good because he understands the truth which advises its performance ; and then it shows how he may reach that life more interior still—the celestial—when man acts in full reciprocation of the love of his Creator, with love dominating his whole being.

Primal man was created, and all men are born, spiritual-natural, with internal and external faculties appropriate to this dual nature. Man, however, has no innate knowledge either of the spiritual or of the natural world. All knowledge has to be acquired, and as the Bible is not concerned primarily with the acquisition of

¹ See Ch. i., p. 6.

knowledge of the material world, it is the progress of the spiritual life, regulated by the development of spiritual knowledge, that is the subject treated here ; and the story of Creation, representative of the regeneration of the soul from the natural to the spiritual, describes the progress through six states as the work of six days.

The First Day. In the earliest stage of human existence, when the natural, material life is everything, the spiritual life of the soul is enveloped in darkness. Through the mercy of the Lord the soul is awakened to the reality of the higher spiritual life. The truth that there is something superior to living for self and worldly knowledge dawns upon the mind. The light of spiritual life is created in the soul. The darkness of the evening in which its own selfish and purely natural life has been passed gives place to the brightness of the morning that ushers in the new life of living from the Lord. This is the work of the first day of Creation, the first stage in the regenerate life. Each day is a passing from evening to morning, for each stage marks a progressive renunciation of self and a fuller submission to the Lord.

The Second Day. The second day's work is a stage in which great intellectual advance is made. The ability to distinguish between the truths of the merely natural life and those of the higher spiritual life is brought into consciousness and developed. The waters under the firmament are divided from those above the firmament, and man realizes that it is his interior spiritual life that is the life of heaven.

The Third Day. During the third stage there is much intellectual activity. The desire for knowledge is keen, and the memory is stored with acquisitions of spiritual as well as natural truth. This knowledge leads to closer reflection on the manner of life previously followed, and

the man from feelings of remorse is induced to live a better and less selfish life. His motives, however, are not of a very estimable nature. Although it is the Lord who, as the Sower, sows the seed in his mind, the man believes that his intellectual activity and the actions resulting therefrom are of his own initiative; and so they lack the vitality which distinguishes actions that are acknowledged as inspired by the Lord. They are represented successively by the grass, the herb and the fruit tree, which now appear. Thus is described the work of the third day.

The Fourth Day. Man is now becoming conscious of the two great principles which dominate all spiritual life, namely, love in the will and faith in the understanding; and the emergence of these two principles within the soul is represented by the creation of the two great lights, the sun and the moon, the work of the fourth day.

The Fifth Day. Further, when the understanding has become grounded in the knowledge of the Lord and faith in Him as the source of all truth, a great change comes over the man with regard both to the knowledge he acquires and to his thoughts, ideas and reasonings. Formerly his memory was stored with knowledges as waters form the sea, but this knowledge was dead, being, as he imagined, the product of his own self-derived intelligence. Now he has risen to the conception that all knowledge is a vital, living thing when related by faith to the Source of all Truth. Moreover, his thoughts and reasonings are now regarded as inspired and vivified by the Spirit of Truth. A living quality has been imparted to the things of his understanding namely, knowledges and the intellectual products of his reason. A living faith in the Lord is the mainspring of all that he does. God has performed in him the work of the fifth day, represented by the creation of the moving, living things of the sea and the fowls of the air.

The Sixth Day. The next stage in the regeneration or spiritual development of primal man, and of man undergoing regeneration at all times, is described in the story as the work of the sixth day. Here a most important progressive step is taken. When the understanding has been completely subordinated in all its activities by a living faith, his will undergoes a corresponding change. Formerly ruled by selfish and worldly loves, the will now submits to direction from the living faith in the understanding. A new love inspires his speech and his actions. He speaks from a love of truth and he acts from a love of good, His affections are ennobled, exalted from the low, base motives that love of self had previously caused to rule his conduct. In the language of the Letter there are now created the living creature, cattle, creeping thing and beast of the earth. Animals are the living, throbbing loves that animate the will and move the regenerating man to deeds of self-less devotion. Throughout this creation story the things of the understanding, knowledge, thoughts, reason, faith, all that pertain to the intellect, have prior mention ; and the will and what proceeds directly into the life take a secondary place. This is because it is the progress in regeneration of man as to his understanding, or his spiritual development, that is the subject of the narrative. The result is the work of the sixth day. The harmonizing of the understanding and the will, or of faith and love, with faith as the predominant partner, has been effected. The creation of man as an image of God has taken place, for man becomes this when he attains his fullest stature in the spiritual degree of life, the second of the three planes, natural, spiritual and celestial, on which man can live.

Gen. ii. 1-3. Creation : the attainment of the celestial plane. When man has progressed in regeneration to the attainment of the spiritual state in which faith and love

have become united, the upward urge may continue to press upon him.

The Seventh Day. Love seeks to take the place of faith and to become the ruling factor in his life. When love gains the mastery, then the celestial state is reached, the work of the seventh day. The completion of the work, however, is not so momentary and sudden as the record in the narrative would seem to indicate. There has been much in man's nature that resisted the advances of love, and much opposition has had to be subdued. When all this was done it is said that God rested ; for, while man makes spiritual progress as if he were the agent, he now realizes that it is God who has been working for his regeneration, and when this approaches completion and the threshold of the celestial state has been reached, the narrative states what naturally appears to be the case, namely, that God rested. This, however, fittingly describes the peace and happiness of the celestial state, the seventh day, the sabbath of the soul.

(2) *The Second Creation Story : Ch. ii. 4-7*

What follows from verse 4 to verse 7 is an account of the wonderful change that takes place in man when his will becomes an instrument of love dominating his whole being. Proceeding downward through his whole nature the celestial principle of love charges with a new life the intellectual man whose development by slow stages has just been described. New rational and scientific principles take the place of the old. The plant of the field and the herb of the field are now watered by the rain and the mist descending from within, nourishing in the external nature of man new truths in which he believes and animating new desires for what is good and upright, as the refreshing rain and dew transform a parched and thirsty land. The change, moreover, is all-pervading. It affects the lowest and commonest thoughts and actions of everyday

life, touching the dust of the ground. The very external nature becomes transformed. The whole being, down to the outward man, is reformed, re-created. The man, throughout his whole nature, is re-born, regenerated. The celestial man now treads the ground of this earth. Faith has prepared the man for this new life, but the life of love, breathed into him by God, creates the new man.

Thus the two Creation stories are not two versions of the same series of incidents, described by different writers and recorded in different manuscripts whose literal details are so divergent as to prevent belief in either as literal fact. The two stories are, in reality, complementary, forming one continuous whole, and the record is not intended to be believed as a literal narrative. The Letter here, as everywhere, is the fittest medium for the expression of what lies infinitely deep within, in spirit.

The theory of the Higher Critics that the use of the names God and Jehovah in what appear to be duplicate records of the same story indicates the combining of two separate accounts, the Elohist and the Jahvist, crumbles to pieces before the realization of the fact that the name God is used when the immediate or main reference is to the intellect or understanding or wisdom, and the name Jehovah or Lord God when the immediate or main reference is to the will or love. In this fact also lies the explanation of what appears to be the repetition in different terms of the same idea, commonly attributed to a mere characteristic of Hebrew literary idiom, namely, parallelism and dualism. The Word is not concerned with literary peculiarities but with spiritual realities, particularly with the development of the spiritual nature of man. As that nature consists of his understanding and his will, the Word everywhere appeals to these faculties, sometimes together, sometimes separately, in its ministry of truth and love. Nowhere is there needless

repetition. Nowhere is there a contradiction of one record by another: each account with its appropriate details in the Letter has reference to its own spiritual faculty. There is no possibility of reconciling the differences in the Letter: in the spirit there is no need to reconcile. Thus the name God is used in the first account of the Creation, Gen. i. 1. There the subject treated is the development of primal man from the merely natural state without spiritual life to the spiritual stage by instruction in the truths of faith, and the name God is used, as it is always used throughout the Word when the reference is to truth. In the second account, however, Ch. ii. 4, when man has progressed in regeneration to the highest or celestial stage, the Deity is called Jehovah, a name which always has reference to love.¹

(3) *Life in Eden.* Ch. ii.-iii.

Gen. ii. 8-17. From verse 8 to verse 17 there follows a description of the blissful life led by celestial man, as the man of the Most Ancient Church may now be called. He lived in Eden, representing a state of love, and in a garden, representing the beautiful and productive intelligence with which he was endowed. The garden was watered by the fertilizing river of wisdom, which, dividing into four heads, enriched with living streams countries that like themselves are not now geographical realities, whatever they may have been when the record was first composed. These rivers and countries have now for us only the inner meaning they conveyed when they were first used. That meaning relates to the faculties and functions of the mind, a meaning of eternal, universal application, appropriate to the spiritual psychology of the soul.

The four quarters of the mind of celestial man were supplied in full measure with a knowledge of truth

¹ See Ch. vi., p. 48.

appropriate to their needs. There was the first river Pison, denoting the truth that was fashioned into faith by love ; for it watered the land of Havilah where there was gold, and gold is said to be found where love predominates. As the first river Pison is the river of the will, where the will to good or love is dominant, so the second river Gihon is the river of the understanding, when faith occupies the position it ought to occupy, subordinate to love. It is said to water the land of Cush, or Ethiopia, a land of precious stones, which are the knowledges of good and truth that go to the building up of a true faith in harmony with love. The third river is Hiddekel. This river is said to go eastward to Assyria, as it stands for the knowledge which is sought by the reason and upon which the rational faculty delights to exercise itself, not only in the formulation of ideas but also in the investigation of the deeper problems of philosophy and metaphysics, for Assyria represents the rational mind or the rational principle in the mind. Assyria is said to be eastward as the light that enlightened the reason of celestial man came from the East, the Source whence comes all spiritual light, the Light of the world. The fourth river that furnished the celestial mind with the requisite knowledge to satisfy its range of intellectual activity was named Euphrates. By Euphrates is meant knowledge in its lowest or most material form, the knowledge of nature and of natural things, or the scientific principle. This principle forms a link between the spiritual things of the Church and the rational principle, as the Euphrates in later times was represented as forming the boundary of Israel towards Assyria.

Moreover, when we read that the man of the Most Ancient Church was permitted to eat of every tree of the garden we learn that the celestial man knew and understood by an interior perception from the Divine

what is good and what is true as soon as this was presented to him. But he was warned against seeking to investigate the things of faith by employing the facts of science and the knowledge he acquired through his senses. He was forbidden to build up for himself, and form into what he might term faith, opinions and doctrines from his own self-derived intelligence. In the language of the Letter, he was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen. ii. 18. In the course of time, however, signs of decadence began to make their appearance. Man in the full exercise of his freedom and rationality began to take an increasing delight in feeling and acting from his own will, rather than from the will of God, and in thinking his own thoughts and framing for himself ideas and principles from his expanding knowledge of the outer world instead of exercising his intellectual powers in relating such knowledge to the principles of Divine Truth which intuitive perception had brought within his understanding. There was growing up within him a desire for a life of his own, a selfhood, as it were, instead of the celestial life completely controlled by the Divine Love and Wisdom ; and God in His mercy, in order not to do violence to man's freedom, even by pressing on him the better part, granted to man to have this life. As indicated above in Ch. ix., p. 73, this change in man is described in the words of the narrative :

“ And the Jehovah God said, It is not good that man should be alone ; I will make an help meet for him.”—verse 18.

It will be noted that the narrative seems to lay the initiative on God. It was in reality a dispensation of Divine Love making the best provision possible for man in his wayward progress.

The name Adam is now used. It means “ man,” and

has no individual significance ; it represents in general all men of the Most Ancient Church.

What man was losing by preferring the life-less level of his natural, material existence to the Divinely animated life of love and thought was brought home to him by powerful appeal to his reason. God passed in review before him, in all their beauty and dignity the pure and upright affections and desires of the will—represented by the animals, and the brilliant knowledge and noble principles of the understanding—represented by the fowls of the air. Although man realized how desirable were the animals and birds as formed by God, and understood how excellent were all the things of the higher life, for as the narrative states, he gave names to them all, he still desired his own life ; and how the Lord granted this is recorded in the story as the formation of woman to be an help meet for him.

Gen. iii. Further stages in the decadence of the Most Ancient Church are described in detail in the story of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and man's expulsion from the Garden.

The serpent is the representative of the sensual principle in man. This is a most useful and necessary principle, for it is through the gateway of the senses that all knowledge of the world of nature comes, and this knowledge only attains its proper value when it is made to serve the spiritual. This principle now became the dominant factor in the mind. Man now reached the stage of beginning to doubt the reality of spiritual knowledge and doctrine concerning faith and life, of which his perception had previously assured him. He now began to lose faith in, and disbelieve everything spiritual which he could not see or verify by actual sense experience. His sensual faculties were the criterion by which he tested truth and falsity and decided upon what was right and wrong in conduct. Exercising his intellectual

powers upon the knowledge he acquired through science and sense impressions, and making these the object of all his thinking, he ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Under the ascendancy of his selfhood, influenced by his sensual principle, he lived for himself alone, and thus made himself like a god, acknowledging no superior.

The dire consequences that followed the exaltation of the sensual principle to the ruling place in the mind are dramatically pictured in the series of events that followed till man was finally driven from Eden. This expulsion expresses the fact that he at last reached the corporeal, unregenerate level, dead to real spiritual life, from which he had been raised. The gloom of the picture, however, is lightened by the promise of a Messiah Who should bruise the serpent's head, or bring to an end the dominion of evil.

(4) *Decline of the Most Ancient Church*—Ch. iv.-vi. 8

Gen. iv. The broad line of declension along which the Most Ancient Church moved to its consummation is told in the story of events that led to man's expulsion from Eden. As all primal men did not attain to the celestial standard of interior perfection so all who did reach it did not fall in one simultaneous ruin. When decline set in it was gradual, and marked by the formation of sects and the spread of heresies. These developed with overwhelming virulence, and the faithful members were steadily reduced in numbers till they finally died out.

The principal feature of the Most Ancient Church was the subordinate nature of faith and doctrine. These at first never appeared as factors in church life. Love to the Lord was the all-sufficient motive for all action. There came a time, however, when many demanded the formulation of creeds to satisfy their intellectual pre-dilections, and the rise of these creeds or systems of

doctrine within the church is represented by the birth of children and generations. Thus there grew up with many the idea that faith was the essential to right living, and with others that love to the neighbour or charity was the proper rule of life. Cain and Abel were born, Cain representing the former belief and Abel the latter. Those denoted by Cain and Abel fashioned their own distinctive creeds and formed their own distinctive sects for the worship of the Lord. This worship, as well as the life which is the embodiment and token of worship, was represented by the offerings of the two brothers. The fruit of the ground is fitting representative of the dead works of faith, corporeal and spiritually lifeless ; but the firstlings of the flock and the fat are the holy affections of the heart which charity constantly exercises. The hatred of Cain for Abel, resulting in the death of Abel, is indicative of the destructive depths to which faith alone, cold, hard, remorseless, can descend ; but the mark on Cain to preserve him alive is a Divine promise that even in faith alone lie the potentialities of spiritual life. That the promise is sure is guaranteed by the birth of Enos, or the development in the Church of a faith which would make provision for the incorporation of charity.

Gen. v. There is now described, under the figure of names of men and their sons, the specific stages, or phases in the life of the Most Ancient Church when certain principles, represented by these names, were predominant. Through these stages that Church passed from its inception with primal men to its heights of idyllic grandeur, and also to its decline and consummation, to be succeeded by the Ancient Church, established amongst those termed Noah, with whom had remained the Divine principles of the Most Ancient Church sufficiently strong to form the foundation of a new Church.

Gen. vi. 1-8. These verses bring to an end the history of the Most Ancient Church. The depravity to which it had sunk is figuratively described in scathing terms ; but hope for mankind is centred in the fact that a remnant, called Noah, found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

CHAPTER XI

THE ANCIENT WORD : SECTION II. GENESIS CH. VI. v.9-XI. THE ANCIENT OR NOATIC CHURCH.

- (1) Noah, the Ark, the Flood ; the End of the Most Ancient Church, and the Establishment of a New Spiritual Church, Ch. VI.-IX.
- (2) Wide Diffusion of the Ancient Church ; and the Church of Heber, Ch. X.
- (3) The Significance of Babel, Ch. XI.

THE ANCIENT OR NOATIC CHURCH

GEN. VI. 9-22. As the Church in the world, under the form in which it first appeared—the Most Ancient Church—was approaching its end, the Word now describes the provision that was made for the establishment of that form of the Church which was to succeed it. This section of the Word describes the instruction of the man of the Church in intellectual things whereby faith might be developed in him in preparation for the life of regeneration to which he might be led. Therefore the name God is employed, as is the case through the whole Word where things of the intellect or faith are in reference, just as the name Jehovah or the Lord is employed where things of the will or of love are involved.

- (1) *Noah, the Ark, the Flood ; the End of the Most Ancient Church and Establishment of a New Spiritual Church, Ch. vi.-ix.*

Under the figure of Noah is described the spiritual state of those amongst whom a new Church could be founded, called the Noatic Church. They were those of the Most Ancient Church who had not sunk so low that their regeneration was beyond hope. The inner perception of truth was closed to them, but they were willing to learn the way of truth and life by the external means

of speech and writing. By faith they walked with God ; and although the love of God was not the dominant principle that animated their hearts they were moved by charity or goodwill towards the neighbour. Thus they had within them the essential elements which could ensure their spiritual life ; and their progress towards this stage of the regenerate life, as the result of conquering in temptation, is described by the provision of the Ark, by means of which they were enabled to survive the Flood which brought spiritual destruction to the rest of the men of the Most Ancient Church.

By the Ark is meant the Church or the man of the Church in similar circumstances at any time, who is to be regenerated and in whom are the sacred principles which are to be his protection against the flood of evil and falsity now threatening all mankind. The numbers in the measurements of the Ark indicate the meagre equipment of the good and the true remaining with him from childhood days and the training of youth. The window of his intellect, enlightening his mental world, looks upward, and the presence of the door at the side denotes his obedience to the voice of instruction. The order in which his household, the birds and animals enter, the birds being mentioned first, indicates that the spiritual faculty of the understanding is taking precedence in the work of regeneration over the things of the will.

An important link between the Most Ancient Church and those which follow is represented by Enoch (Ch. v. 22). Before the faculty of communicating spiritual enlightenment by interior perception was quite lost in the Most Ancient Church, vocal speech and writing were introduced to take its place : and it was provided that some writers should preserve in outer form that instruction in spiritual things which were essential for man's salvation. Those who formulated and recorded such doctrine

or teaching were called Enoch, a name which means to instruct. Of Enoch it is said that he "walked with God," v. 22, that is, taught and lived according to the doctrine of faith, which is the result of instruction. Thus those represented by Noah entered into the labours of Enoch, and of Noah also it is said that he "walked with God."

In Ch. vii. is continued the description of the preparations made for the establishment of the Noatic Church. The name Jehovah is now used, for the main reference here is to the things of the will, the desires, the affections, the emotions. The animals are mentioned first, and the number seven is prominent for seven is used throughout the Word of that which is holy, and a good will, or charity towards the neighbour, must be well furnished with pure and holy affections.

The nature of the temptations that assail the voluntary things of the will are then described, and this is followed by the measures necessary to protect the essentials of the new Church. The chapter closes with a reference to the final stage of the Most Ancient Church.

Ch. viii. As the Flood subsides, as temptations cease, the man of the Church realizes the presence of God in the truths which are guiding him. With his understanding favourable to the formation of a true faith, and his will bent on doing justly his course is now definitely set towards the regenerate life. At first is described how he fluctuates between the true and the false till he plainly perceives the true. Then the truths on which his faith can rest appear, and he now regulates his conduct according to his faith. His guiding principle is the Divine Truth, and the name of the Deity is God. The concluding verses of this chapter describe how with his whole being—his understanding and his will—dominated by charity he enters upon the regenerate state, the beginning of the new Church in which the Divine as Jehovah claims his worship and his allegiance.

Ch. ix. The Word in this chapter describes how the regenerate man from the new good will he has acquired and the clear understanding of the truths he now believes must regulate his outward life and conduct. It further promises that all men may now enter into the life of charity.

The principles that prevail in the Church in general as well as in the individual are then described under the figure of Noah's three sons. By Shem is denoted the principle of internal worship, or those who, realizing the Divine source of all that is good and true, make inward acknowledgment more important than formal external expression. Japheth on the other hand represents the principle of external worship. Those who regulate their lives according to this principle know less of the interior things of religion but are faithful in the outward observance of the little they know. They live in the fear of the Lord and in the spirit of goodwill towards their neighbours. By Ham, however, are signified those who regard faith alone as essential. To know with them is more than to do. The formalities of religion weigh more with them than the life of religion. Lacking in charity, regarding good works as of no account in the religious life, they represent a corrupt form of the Church, and from them is an easy descent to those who maintain a wholly external form of worship and consequent life devoid of all interior spiritual content. Such are denoted by Canaan, of whom Ham is said to be the father.

The man of the Church, however, is liable to fall into error and to be deluded by falsity. When this happens he is afforded guidance for his correction and recovery.

(2) *Wide Diffusion of Ancient Church ;
the Church of Heber. Ch. x.*

Up to this point the Word has been written in the purely correspondential style with no historical

significance. Thus by Noah and his sons, who never had existence as men, are represented the Ancient Church and the principles that dominated that Church, the sons representing the fundamental differences under which all the varying shades of belief and practice might be classed. Now, however, the threshold of history is being approached. By the names of Noah and his sons are meant nations that had historical existence in the countries they inhabited, extending far and wide over the Central East, comprising many kingdoms and empires, as Assyria, Mesopotamia, Syria, Ethiopia, Arabia, Lybia, Egypt, Philistia, Tyre and Sidon, and Canaan. These constituted the Ancient Church in the wide diversity of doctrine and life that developed in the course of time. Unfortunately this development was accompanied by a decline in spirituality. Decadence set in. The true nature of internal worship was lost. Even external worship which at first retained some contact with the spiritual through a knowledge of representatives and correspondences was being degraded into idolatry, the external symbol taking the place in worship which the spiritual principle ought to hold. It was therefore provided that a Church, differing from the Ancient Church but formed out of it should be established in which a lower kind of faith and worship should be maintained, but without the grossness that now marked the decadent Ancient Church. This second Ancient Church was founded in Syria by Heber, and it spread westwards to Canaan with the nation that acknowledged Heber as their father, the nation that was subsequently known as the Hebrew nation.

The worship of this Church consisted for the most part in external things. The knowledge of Jehovah and the internals of worship which it still maintained were teachings that had been handed down by tradition from those of the Most Ancient Church who were called Enoch ;

their worship however, mainly consisted of representatives. They employed high places, groves and images, and had a priesthood with the related priestly offices and functions, and a regular code of religious ordinances. They also performed sacrifices ; but as these had a spiritual significance they served to prevent the spread of human sacrifices which the very corrupt forms of the Ancient Church were including in their degraded forms of idolatry. It was this form of worship, but wholly external, from which all interior spiritual content had been lost, that was later restored among the descendants of Jacob, to whom the name Hebrew was also applied.

(3) *The Significance of Babel.* Ch. xi.

The Word now describes how the Noatic Church declined and became unworthy to be the medium through which the Divine principles of truth and goodness must be kept alive in the world. By means of a record of mere names of nations and families in the Letter the previous chapter has described the many and varied differences of doctrine and ritualistic practice that arose in the course of the Church's propagation and extension. Differences in formal statement of doctrine and also in ritual or forms of worship are not of vital consequence. These must necessarily arise as the Church extends its borders to suit the various circumstances of the peoples and their national propensities. Notwithstanding these differences, which may exist in any Church, the Word at the beginning of this chapter emphasizes the fact that so long as charity or goodwill remained an operative principle in the life unity throughout the Church was assured. All were bound together in the one central fact of religion, the fact that God is One and His name Jehovah.

When, however, the love of self became dominant, and people began to practise evil toward the neighbour

instead of charity, or as the record in its simple narrative form expresses it, "when they journeyed from the East," decadence set in. Then was set up the city of Babel with its tower, which represents extravagant externalism in religion as a cloak for intellectual arrogance and moral depravity. The love of self instead of the love of the neighbour developed as their ruling principle, and in accordance with it they refashioned their doctrine and their worship. They gave themselves up with more and more licence to the evils of life that self love dictates, and the truths they knew were falsified to approve their selfish desires. They profaned the sacred things of worship so that it centred in themselves and in the things of the world instead of in Jehovah and in Divine things. Internal worship perished, so that only the outward forms remained. There is now described the decline of the Church towards idolatry not only through the Church as originally established called Noah but also through its second form derived from Heber. At the mention of Terah, v. 24, internal worship has died out. External worship by means of representatives that had lost all spiritual significance was all that remained of the old tradition: idolatry was the universal practice of the Church. The nation that took its name from Terah was typical of the degenerate state of the Church. Jehovah was no longer their only God: they now served other gods. Jos. xxiv. 2.

When Terah is said to have died idolatry as the general worship of the Church came to an end. With the mention of his son Abram, the first historical person in the Divine narrative appears, and with him is given the promise of a Church, derived though it was from one mainly sunk in idolatry, which would maintain the worship of Jehovah, the One living God.

CHAPTER XII

1. THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE BIBLE OF THE JEWISH CHURCH.
 - (1) The Ancient Word, Genesis, Ch. I.-XI.
 - (2) The Historical Word, from Ch. XII.
2. STORIES OF THE PATRIARCHS: ABRAHAM, ISHMAEL, ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH.
3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JEWISH CHURCH—THE REPRESENTATIVE OF A CHURCH.
4. NOTE ON DATES, NUMBERS, TIME, SPACE.

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE BIBLE OF THE JEWISH CHURCH

(I) *The Ancient Word*: Gen. Ch. i.-xi.

THERE are no sudden changes in the course of spiritual development as there are in the national careers of worldly powers. The influence of the spiritual principles that ruled the minds of men in the days of the Most Ancient Church, as well as in the days of the Ancient Church, persisted amongst the many widespread peoples with whom these Churches had been established long after the decline and consummation of these Churches. How far this influence extended over Asia and Africa cannot now be determined, but we have two instances of this persistence recorded in our Bible. Melchizedek was a priest of Jehovah with a knowledge of the spiritual use of bread and wine long after the Church of which he was a priest had ceased to serve its divine function. Representing a higher spiritual order than the Jewish Church ever occupied he was able to bless Abram in the initial stages of that Church's growth. Again, Balaam was one of those in Syria who retained prophetic power from the Ancient Church, and was skilled in its knowledge of Jehovah and in sacrifices as a form of worship. He, however, represented that Church

after virtue had departed, and his knowledge was perverted to the practices of evil.

When the time came for the Jewish Church to be established, the Bible of that Church, which voiced for it the Word of God and which was to serve as the outer record of its spiritual development, did not start with the foundation of the Jewish nation. It is prefaced by the spiritual record of the two preceding Churches, the Most Ancient Church and the Ancient Church, Gen. i.-xi., and the Jewish Church is presented in its due perspective as third in descending order in the scale of spiritual values, as well as third in point of time.

The record of its spiritual history is the proximate subject of the inner sense of the rise, decline and fall of the Jewish nation as told in the Letter from the Call of Abram, Gen. xii., to the conclusion of the Old Testament. Thus the Word of the Old Testament in its entirety is not merely the Bible of the Jewish Church. It is the Word of God as given to mankind in its lowest ultimate form to meet the spiritual circumstances of men from the time they lived the primal life of love till they raised the Cross on Calvary.

(2) *The Historical Word* : from Gen. Ch. xii.

From Gen. xii. the style in which the Word is written is changed. Instead of representing spiritual ideas only the Letter is now that of literature generally. It is now historical, describing persons who actually lived, incidents that actually occurred and scenes of objective reality. It also employs rhetoric, poetry, fable and song. All this is subservient, however, to its main purpose and use. The language is always correspondential. Whatever meaning the Letter in its outer form may convey it is the inner spiritual content, enclosed within the Letter, as a soul within a body, which is the real and ultimate object of apprehension. In this way the historical annals

of the Jewish nation represent the spiritual life of the Jewish Church as well as that of the individual man of the Church, and, as is the case throughout, the inmost reference is to the mind and life of the Divine Author of the Word.

2. STORIES OF THE PATRIARCHS

In 1921 B.C., the first date (see Note on Dates, Numbers, Time, Space, at end of this chapter) for which there seems to be any warrant, the call came to Abram, a member of a family of idolators in Syria, to leave native land, father's house and kindred for a land of promise in the West. Obedience to the call is the first step in that historical sequence of events which picture in dramatic form the psychological and spiritual processes in the establishment of the Jewish Church. In the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Esau and Jacob are pictured the developments through which the human mind must pass before the Jewish Church could emerge as the divinely appointed Temple of Jehovah's presence with men.

As man had declined from the celestial state of the Most Ancient Church and also from the spiritual state of the Ancient Church, a new basis had to be found upon which to build a Church appropriate to his fallen state. The long detailed historical record represents the various steps in the spiritual process. First comes the urge to the highest principle in the soul, represented by Abram, to leave the idolatrous life of the world for a life that recognizes the Divine. It is significant that the name Abram was changed to Abraham by the addition of the letter H, the Divine element in the name Jehovah. The principle represented by Abraham is thereby made analogous to the celestial principle of love that characterized the Most Ancient Church.

The Abraham stories, recorded from the Call in Gen. xii. to his death in Gen. xxv. are spiritually a description of the Lord's Kingdom as it existed in the world in its highest state in the souls of regenerating men before the Jewish Church became generally established ; for Abraham represents the celestial man, or man at his best, at this particular stage of spiritual development.¹

Mankind, however, did not remain on the comparatively high plane pictured by the history of Abraham. As Reason, that most insistent factor in the human mind, required to be satisfied that this life is best, so the celestial principle, denoted by Abraham, intuitive in origin, was succeeded in the spiritual development of the inner life by the emergence of the intellect as a ruling factor. This appeared first (Ch. xvi.) as the faculty of reasoning from knowledge derived from the material world, represented by the birth of Ishmael, the son of Hagar, an Egyptian woman. Such a rationality is coldly intellectual, hard, unyielding, and stubbornly contentious. This in turn gave place (Ch. xxi.) to a higher rational, based not on knowledge or truth merely, but on goodness motivated by love, represented by the birth of Isaac, son of Sarah, whose name also was changed to indicate exaltation by the addition of the Divine element, the letter H.

In the course of time there arose that crisis in the spiritual life which always marks decadence and presages further decline. The mastery passes to Jacob. The right of good to be the predominant agent on whatever plane life is lived is challenged by truth. The question presents itself for answer : Is goodness the end to be sought above

¹ In Arcana Caelestia it is shown how the whole life of Abraham which is described in the Word, has no respect to Abraham except only in the historical sense, but has respect to the Lord and His Kingdom.—No. 3253.

the acquisition of truth ? The answer is pictured in the story of Esau and Jacob. As Esau, who represents the good of the natural man, sold his birthright to Jacob, who represents the truth of the same, so truth, the hard unyielding facts of nature and the natural world, obtained the mastery, and Jacob, the type of the natural man in whom truth predominates, and his descendants became the nation among whom the Jewish Church was established.

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JEWISH CHURCH— THE REPRESENTATIVE OF A CHURCH

There is a radical difference, however, between the Church which was now being developed and the Churches that preceded it and followed it. In so far as the Jewish Church is regarded as synonymous with the Jewish nation it is only the external of the Church that can be so identified. The spiritual verities that should actuate the soul are the internal realities of the spiritual life : these are the internal, the real Church. The external forms in which these verities embody themselves and by which they express themselves are the outward visible organization, the rites and ceremonies of worship which should betoken the inner realities. With the Jewish nation their Church consisted solely of this external form. Their genius was such that life and knowledge of any real spiritual nature transcended their moral and intellectual achievement. The external outward form was all that the Church meant to them. To them the Lord's kingdom, the Church, was an external, natural kingdom. They could not understand the celestial things of love and the spiritual things of truth, so they were instructed through Moses, the Prophets and the Priests to build an exterior edifice of ceremonial worship which embodied these spiritual realities, though their meaning

was unknown to them. Thus the Jewish Church was developed as an external religious system and was merged in the national life of the people. All the ceremonies of their religious system and all the activities of their national life were embodiments of the inner spiritual Church. The spiritual Church was thus kept alive among men and within touch of the spiritually minded, although the formal worshipper was unconscious of the inner content of his worship. To him the outer ceremony was the all-in-all of worship. The virtue in his ceremonial acts was in their meticulous performance, for thus they represented something deeper than he knew. To the scrupulous Jew his Church was a purely natural Church, representative in its every detail of the spiritual Kingdom, the Church of God, but he lacked the conscious perception of the spiritual content of which his representative worship was the shadow. The Jewish Church, therefore, as the Church of the Jewish nation, being merely representative of a Church, differs from other Churches in whose worship spiritual life is consciously present. With such Churches outer formality is of secondary importance to inward, spiritual life, which is manifested in an outer life of love to the Lord and the neighbour, and in the pursuit of truth as a means to this life.

Man, then, having reached that lowly stage of existence, the life of the natural, material plane, based on truth in its external form, the establishment of a Church adapted to this state was begun with Jacob and his descendants. The Jewish nation of course played its own part in the natural course of world history, acting upon surrounding peoples and re-acting to their influences. There is an inner side, however, to the life of nations which is more or less evident in their outward history. Just as the outer life of the individual is more or less expressive of an internal spiritual character that can be recognized but hardly described unless by such

general terms as good or bad, and the development of which may be regarded as the purpose of his life in the world, so nations in their national life embody something spiritual which it becomes their function to express. Vague and indefinite as this expression may be yet there are outstanding examples of nations bringing their peculiar spiritual genius into the sphere of worldly affairs. Greece has brought down to the plane of everyday life the love of beauty in faultless sculpture, Italy the love of painting and music, Rome the love of law and order and Britain the love of freedom and untrammelled self-development, and other modern nations their various ideologies. Viewed in this broad aspect the Jewish nation maintained, at a period when maintenance was most urgent, the idea of the Unity of the Godhead. In a way, however, which is quite exceptional in national history, the Jewish nation in the records which have been Divinely preserved embodies not one idea merely, but a full and complete presentation of spiritual life and truth, a spiritual Church for the spiritual perception of man for all time. The record of the inception, progress and consummation of this Church is treated throughout the Old Testament story (from Ch. xii.) ; and the birth of the twelve sons of Jacob (Ch. xxix.-xxxv.), ensuring the founding of a great and numerous people with tribes of varied characteristics adequate for its separate existence as a nation in the world, depicts the emergence of the fundamental principles of goodness and truth that must form the spiritual constitution of a Church.

The part the sons of Jacob played in the Divine history is representative of the course followed in the spiritual upbuilding of the Church in the individual as well as in men generally, when the circumstances of life and thought are similar. The nature of the Church, therefore, represented by Jacob was purely external, for man as typified by Jacob rested on truth which is founded

only on an objective and scientific basis, even in religious matters, and he lived his life in accordance with such truth. To show, however, that a real Church must have an internal content as well as an external form it is recorded twice that Jacob's name was changed to Israel ; for though the nation still retained its peculiar characteristics it could, under the name of Israel, represent a Church with an internal quality which Jacob did not signify. So it is as Israel that the Jewish Church henceforth becomes generally known, although the name Jacob continues to be used when the reference is to the Church in its lowest or outermost state, with truth as its dominant principle. The first occasion on which the change of name is mentioned was when Jacob wrestled with the Angel ; for this represents victory in temptation, and it is by such victory that the merely natural man can pass from his external worldly life to the deeper inner life of the spirit. The second occasion was just prior to the birth of Jacob's twelfth son, named Benoni by his mother, indicating temptation in the spiritual life, but named Benjamin by his father, indicating that spiritual principle of conjunction that could now be typified by the bond of union between Joseph, representing the inner spiritual kingdom of Divine truth with its attendant life of good in accordance with that truth, and Benjamin, representing the innermost degree of the natural mind.

By the stories of Joseph (Ch. xxxvii.-l.), his relations with his brethren and the Sojourn in Egypt are described in romantic detail and in perfect sequence the course of a most important phase in the inner history of the Church. At first there is the rejection of the higher spiritual principle signified by Joseph, in favour of the lower natural truths, which the ten sons of Jacob represent. Then there is described how these natural truths of external religion may come to be reconciled with and united to spiritual truth only when the principle

represented by Benjamin has been suitably developed and has made its presence felt ; and how the Children of Israel remained in Egypt, the land of natural knowledge and wisdom, with Joseph as a royal governor, till they became welded into a great and powerful nation. This sojourn in Egypt represented the psychological and spiritual development of the Jewish Church through the acquiring of the knowledge necessary for its religious growth.

Although it was a state of bondage for the Children of Israel it is a necessary state of instruction in the doctrinals of the Church and its rituals, and also in the knowledge of how these represent things spiritual for every spiritual Israelite.

When Jacob, the natural man, reached the stage when he could rise to a knowledge of the higher life through the appreciation of the spiritual as an effective factor in the religious life, then came the time, in the language of the Letter, that Jacob should die ; for death and burial in the inner sense of the Word represent resurrection, the awakening to a higher life. Before this took place, however, we have the account (Ch. xlix.) of the blessing of his sons. There is also the seemingly strange extension (Ch. xlviii.) of his blessing to Manasseh and Ephraim, sons of Joseph. Although Ephraim was the younger Jacob persisted in bestowing upon him the prior blessing. This indicates, with its own significance in the sequence of events, the fact that, in the natural man represented by Jacob, the intellectual principle which is represented by Ephraim has priority over the will principle which is represented by Manasseh ; or in other words that truth has predominance over good, that belief in the truths of doctrine is to be preferred to the good works of charity.

In the course of this blessing there are passed in review all the principles of goodness and truth that compose the

Church in their true or in their depraved form, and a prophecy is declared of what the future has in store for them. As these principles, however, are abstractions with no independent existence apart from men in whom they are exemplified, the blessing by Jacob of his sons means in the historical sense the description of the state of the Church when it was open to the appreciation of the spiritual. In the individual and universal sense it means the disposal of the man of the Church to recognize the influence the spiritual kingdom should have in ruling the life for good.

We have in the last chapter (Ch. I.) the account of the burial by Joseph of his father. Israel was buried in Canaan. This was the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was the land in which dwelt the people of the Most Ancient Church and also of the Ancient Church. It was pre-eminently the land in which all physical phenomena, all physical features as mountains, rivers, plains, trees and rocks, all living creatures, inhabited places and sacred spots had been given representative names, for it had been the custom of primal men to name the operations of nature and natural objects from their spiritual significance. Canaan, therefore, from its early association with the Lord's first Churches in the world was to Israel and has remained ever since the literal land of promise ; but in the inner spiritual sense it is and will always be symbolic of the Lord's Church and Kingdom—even Heaven itself.

It was, therefore, of the Divine Providence that Israel should be buried there, to indicate that in Canaan should be established among the posterity of Jacob the only form of a Church that could be accommodated to such an external naturally minded people, namely the representative of a Church, known as the Jewish Church.

That man is potentially capable of a higher degree of spiritual life than the life of faith irrespective of the

good works of charity was typified by Joseph's return to Egypt to spend his last years there. This action on the part of Joseph shows that it is possible for the natural sciences and worldly wisdom represented by Egypt to be ennobled by the heavenly principle of good from motives of love. Joseph died 1635 B.C. some fifty years after his father. This is recorded to indicate that this spiritual principle ceased in time to animate the life of the natural man, who preferred the uninspired life of the world. His command that his bones should be carried to Canaan was prophetic of the external nature of the Church that would be established there. His bones represent the lowest ultimates of the Church, the rites and ceremonies enjoined by the teachings of the Church, but uninspired by the vivifying internal spiritual life which was represented by Joseph himself.

The Book of Genesis thus traces in broad outline the ascent of primal man by regeneration to the highest point of human development, natural and spiritual—the state of Eden when life was the continuous worship of the God of Love from an interior perception of Divine Truth. Then it traces by distinct stages man's decline from that celestial state to the lower spiritual plane of life in accordance with the dictates of truth learned and understood, when the church was represented by Noah, till finally man reached the dull, dead level of the natural life, with God's presence among men in the Jewish Church, the representative of a Church to be established among the posterity of Jacob in the land of Canaan, not a land holy in itself but sacred as the earliest home of the Lord's Church in the world and fitting representative of the Lord's kingdom for all time.

In addition to this historical sense in which the spiritual course of man in general is described there is at the same time depicted the inner life of the individual with its ebb and flow of spiritual advance and

retrogression, complete with its infinite variety of personal experience typified in representative incident throughout the Book. But within and beyond all this there is the reference¹ to the life and work of our Lord, embodied particularly in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, each of whom represents our Lord in some particular stage in the process of Glorification.

4. NOTE : DATES, NUMBERS, TIME, SPACE

Dates herein are approximations, and should be regarded as qualified by *circa, about*. In most cases they are traditional, and are given on the analogy of profane history to preserve a comparative historical sequence. Whatever historical value may be placed on sacred chronology it will be observed that the Word itself is not concerned with historical accuracy. Dates do not occur in the Letter of the Word. Dating is only a convention, and dating systems vary with various peoples, and are usually based upon events in their own national history.

The first mention of time in the Word, "In the beginning," has no reference to any particular time in history, and in Ch. i. 1, of Ezekiel, although the thirtieth year is mentioned as if to localize a particular incident, it has no relation to any historical period. From such cases it may be inferred, for they are of general occurrence throughout the Word, that time terms, as day, month, year, as well as numbers, as 3, 7, 30, 40, 70, etc., do not bear their usual literal significance. The purpose of their use is only appreciated when their correspondential value is understood, in keeping with the universal principle on which the whole of the Letter of the Word is written.

¹ This reference is made by Swedenborg the main theme of his exposition of the spiritual sense of Genesis in the relevant portions of the *Arcana Caelestia*.

It may here be stated in brief that numbers are used in the literal narrative of the Word to indicate some spiritual quality, as when 7 is mentioned it is to mark the presence of what is holy. When terms of space are used it is to indicate certain spiritual states of life with reference to their nature or quality, while terms of time are used with reference to the duration, change or degree of completeness of these states.

For an exposition of the use of numbers, weights and measures in the Word see *The Spiritual Signification of Numbers*, by R. Hindmarsh, and for terms of time and space see *Arcana Caelestia*, by Swedenborg, under their appropriate headings.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HEXATEUCH (*continued*)

1. EXODUS. 1635-1491 B.C.
LEVITICUS. 1490 B.C.
NUMBERS. 1490-51 B.C.
2. DEUTERONOMY. 1451 B.C.
3. JOSHUA. 1451-26 B.C.

I. EXODUS : LEVITICUS : NUMBERS

AT the beginning of Exodus is described the intensification of the difficulties endured by the Church, represented by the Israelites, after the spirit of Joseph died out. By the birth of Moses (1571 B.C.) is typified the emergence of the Word of God as a factor in the life. When the Word is received as Law and obeyed it leads to deliverance from the enslaving power of evil and falsity that prevail when things of the spirit are subordinated to the rule of the natural man and the guidance of natural truth. Moses appeared in the history of the Israelites to show how Divine Truth accommodates itself even to the natural man and becomes an outward objective Word. Lower it cannot descend, and its development into a homogeneous body of rational truth and doctrine to rule both worship and life is the subject of the succeeding Books of the Old Testament. Under the guidance of the Word the Church in general and in the individual throws off the rule of natural truth, sacred as well as profane, as the Israelites followed the leadership of Moses out of Egypt, thus beginning the journey to the Promised Land, 1491 B.C.

By the Ten Plagues inflicted upon the land of Egypt are depicted the various stages by which the rule of the lower material world over the things of the spirit is gradually broken till finally there is brought about the

utter condemnation of faith alone as a rule of life. The right of faith to decide the manner of life seems indisputable to the natural man whose horizon is bounded by the material things of time and space, and by the speculations and deductions from them. For him faith is built on the most brilliant achievements in the realm of natural scientific knowledge, and it is supported by the tangible testimony of hard concrete facts. A life based upon the solid foundation of physical reality seems infinitely preferable to one guided by the unseen altruistic bonds of charity ; and the strength of attachment the natural man feels for the principle of faith and its intellectualism, which must be utterly repudiated before the natural man can begin his journey in the regeneration by recognizing the claims of charity, is attested by the grief into which the land of Egypt was plunged by the death of the first-born. The first-born of Egypt had to die before the Children of Israel could be set free to begin their journey to the land where their representative Church should be established. Faith separated from charity has to be utterly renounced by the spiritual Israelitish Church as well as by the individual man of the Church bent on regeneration before the principles of goodness and truth that constitute the internal of any Church can be free to function as the ruling principles of life.

When the deliverance was assured, however, the journey from Egypt to Canaan¹ was long and arduous. The road taken was not the direct one by which Canaan could have been reached in a matter of weeks. It was by way of the wilderness, with its distressing lack of water and food and with ever-present peril from hostile tribes, and it occupied forty years.

As the sojourn in Egypt had been for the Children of Israel a period of instruction in all the knowledge of the

¹ *From Egypt to Canaan*, Rev. J. Bayley. Exposition of the Spiritual Content of the Word from Exodus to Joshua.

time, of which Egypt was the recognized centre, so the journey through the wilderness was a time of trial, an apprenticeship of endurance. It saw the upbuilding of a strong and valiant people, able to attack with success the warlike tribes who inhabited Canaan and appropriate their territory, for none entered Canaan, save Joshua and Caleb, but those who had been born since the host left Egypt.

Less than two months after the departure the Children of Israel arrived at Sinai, a mount of the Horeb range. Here was delivered to Moses the Ten Commandments, the Ceremonial Law with its Sacrificial Rites, and the Civil Law—all that is comprised in the term The Law, by which not only the civil and moral life was to be regulated but also by which the worship of God was to be conducted in the Divinely-ordered Tabernacle, typifying the Temple of God with men. Thus was consolidated in outer form that system of external ceremonial worship which was to serve the Jewish nation till the Messiah should come and bring to man a more interior spiritual conception of the nature of worship and life.

The physical sufferings of hunger and thirst that the Children of Israel had to endure and the combats with the enemy tribes represent the temptations to be passed through by the spiritual Israelite in the warfare to overcome the evils and the falsities that infest the spiritual highway, and forty years represent the full course of such temptations till Canaan is reached.

It is a matter of general knowledge among Christians that the journey from Egypt to Canaan, the tribes who opposed the Children of Israel and the structure of the Tabernacle with its elaborate ceremonialism and its sacrificial ritual all represent the spiritual progress and inner worship of the regenerating man ; yet the Letter of the Word itself conveys no definite knowledge as to how this impression can be justified. The early Christians

had an appreciation of the spiritual realities underlying the Letter from an interior perception. This perception as something that could be understood and expressed in the outer form of language gradually diminished as Christianity became more external and worldly and neither the literature left by them nor any specific teaching of the New Testament reveals a more detailed or particular meaning to be attached to the literal record. Taken by itself the Letter would imply that these tribes were only peoples of a bygone age with no bearing on the life of to-day, and that the elaborate legal system and detail of Tabernacle worship and sacrifice were instructions for a particular people to whom they were first given and who alone were intended to observe them. When, however, it is realized that the whole of the Letter of the Word has an inner spiritual meaning, some measure of which may be understood by a knowledge of correspondences, then this journey from Egypt to Canaan becomes a personal experience open to every individual who desires to make the journey, and who, therefore, may meet the various spiritual tribes infesting the way, and who may worship in spirit and in truth according to the very pattern of the worship of the Tabernacle.

2. DEUTERONOMY

The last chapter of Deuteronomy describes the concluding scenes in the life of Moses. He had delivered the Law a second time to the new generation of Israelites who were now about to enter the land of promise. He had handed over the Leadership to his successor Joshua. The part of the Law which Moses represents is to further the work of reformation that rids the outer life of the more manifest evils encountered on the desert journey. The Kingdom of Heaven, however, is within the heart, and the inner spirit of the Word, which Joshua represents,

now takes up the command and leads into Canaan, where great and powerful evils have to be met and driven out before the Kingdom can be really won, and the deeper spiritual work of regeneration can be undertaken.

The death and burial of Moses typifies the great change that is effected in the manner the Law influences the life when Canaan has come within view. The Law as a stern taskmaster dies, and as it were disappears from sight ; but it arises in renewed life as a mainspring from which all motives derive their virtue. It is not now imposed on the will from without, as injunctions to be obeyed either from hope of reward or fear of punishment. It is now written on the heart, hidden from human gaze, but more active than ever in its purifying ministry.

3. JOSHUA

As Joshua took up the task of leading the Children of Israel into Canaan and directing their settlement there so the Book which bears his name is a fitting continuation and complement of the Pentateuch, so closely associated with the name of Moses. The miraculous manner by which the crossing of the Jordan was effected is a dramatic representation of how the spiritual Israelite makes his entry into the deeper life of the Church. The waters of Jordan typify those simple, elementary introductory truths a knowledge of which is essential to the inner life of regeneration.

The account of the subjugation in seven years of the seven Canaanite nations is the symbolical story of the total overthrow of the great evils in the soul before the spiritual church can gain ascendancy there ; and the distribution of the land between the tribes is a picture of the allocation of the spiritual principles to their distinctive functions in the spiritual life. The Book of Joshua is the spiritual Doomsday Book of the Church

as well as of the individual soul, the various places mentioned corresponding to the different states which may be attained in the spiritual life consequent upon the nature of the spiritual principles that for the time being assume control of the life and conduct.

This Book exemplifies in a striking manner the secondary value to be placed on the historical character of the Word, when compared with its spiritual purpose. The symmetrical unity of the literal story which represents the complete subjugation of the whole of the promised land by the Hebrews who formed a single army under Joshua is not justified by historical fact. Textual and literary criticism places the compilation of the Book at a much later date than the life-time of Joshua, and historical records do not agree that the settlement of Canaan was accomplished in the rapid and systematic manner described in the Book. The suggestion is made by Modern Criticism¹ that the literary form of the Book presenting the Hebrew settlement in Canaan as the result of a rapid and complete conquest appears to be due to the idealizing by a later writer of long past events. This it may be noted is merely a euphemism for describing the record as unhistorical, and destroys its value save as historical fable. As it is written, however, it is a perfect picture of the conquest of the spiritual Canaan for the Church as well as for the individual, accomplished under the leadership of the inner power that resides in the Word, here called Joshua, a name whose other form is Jesus, the Saviour.

With the Book of Joshua the Hexateuch completes the record of the establishment of the Jewish Church in its national home. Under the direct government of God the nation was assured of a successful career although surrounded by powerful enemies, as long as it retained in all purity the worship and love of God. The Book, however, contains within itself the omens of impending

¹ *A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament.* Gray, p. 56.

decadence. Parts of the country remained unconquered. Although the Church as a spiritual reality was established in all the glory of spiritual beauty and perfection, and although its outward representative form had been fashioned in most elaborate ritual yet the human element—the Children of Israel—was never the perfect ultimate for the Church's dwelling with men. As a theocracy the nation was at its highest level of spiritual life. When it fell away from direct Divine control in its national life its decadence in spiritual life was already in progress ; the subsequent history of the nation is one of consistent spiritual decline. There were periods in their national history when the pomp and circumstance of outward success seemed to reflect the achievement of national greatness. The truth is that the splendour of material prosperity, more or less fleeting in its duration, merely served to cloak diminution of the real substantial glory that always attends submission to theocratic rule. Its outward history is one of varying success and failure depending upon the degree in which it chose to alienate itself from the Divine influence. Modifications of the external worship followed this alienation and, steadily, decadence proceeded till at last it reached its climax in the consummation of the Jewish Church.

Thus, while the later portion of the Hexateuch is concerned with the story of the Children of Israel up to the time of their settlement in Canaan it also tells the story in more or less obvious terms of the establishment with them of a Church in the world which embodied Divine Truth in a form that could be understood and translated into a life of worship. This Church exhibits Divine Truth adequately accommodated to a people of such a peculiar genius as the Israelites, just as the two previous Churches, the Adamic and the Noatic, had been perfectly fitted to serve the spiritual needs of man in prehistoric times.

At the same time in the Word's correspondential language this portion of the Hexateuch traces the progress of the individual man of the Church, or of any man of whatever race who happens to be at a similar state in his spiritual development, through the first or preliminary stage of the regenerate life—the wilderness stage—till he enters upon that state of mind and soul which will enable him under the Divine rule to live his outer life in the world in full accord with his spiritual destiny.

Behind and beneath these two references to the Church in general and to man in particular there is, as is the case throughout the Word, the supreme reference to the Lord Himself. In this record of the Hexateuch there is the story of the Lord's work for the redemption of man. In one sense this work was completed by the sacrifice on the Cross ; but in another sense this work is one of continual, increasing endeavour to ensure the salvation of every living soul. So important is this work, succinctly portrayed in the Letter of the Hexateuch, and in particular, clearly summarized in the record of Exodus, that Swedenborg has made the spiritual exposition of that Book in its reference to the redemptive work of our Lord the main theme in the Exodus portion of the *Arcana Caelestia*, answering to his exposition of that portion of Genesis which treats of the Lord's Glorification. To accomplish these two works of Glorification and Redemption was the supreme object for which the Lord came into the world—for which the Word was made flesh ; and throughout the whole of the Word as throughout the Hexateuch, runs the spiritual sense which links together by its triple reference the Church, man, and the Lord in one continuous sequence.

CHAPTER XIV

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE WORD *(continued)*

1. JUDGES. 1426-1117 B.C.

2. SAMUEL. 1155-1015 B.C.

3. THE INSTITUTION OF THE MONARCHY; THE FIRST THREE
KINGS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER.

(1) Saul. 1055 B.C.

(2) David. 1015 B.C.

(3) Solomon. 975 B.C.

I. JUDGES

THE possibility of the establishment of the Church among men and in man in particular is represented by the token conquest of Canaan in seven years and its settlement by the Children of Israel under Joshua. In actual experience, however, the results are not so definite nor so certain of achievement as the record would lead one to imagine; and the case is exactly parallel with the Church and spiritual life at all times. Joshua as the instrument of the Lord's government in Canaan was succeeded by fourteen Judges, and their influence, like his, extended only nominally over the whole land. Historically each exercised only local rule over regions more or less extensive which they were raised to deliver from enemy domination. The Book of Judges mentions twelve, or thirteen if Abimelech the son of Gideon is included, who exercised that office, but describes in detail the incidents associated with the raising up of six, Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah-Barak, Gideon and Samson. In most cases the number of years over which their power extended is given as forty, a number used throughout the Word to represent the whole period during which temptation or conflict with evil powers may last under certain circumstances.

As in the case of Joshua this Book follows no exact chronology in its sequence of events. Beginning with a fragmentary account of the conquest of Canaan carried out in a very imperfect manner by the separate tribes, it next gives a record of events that recurred with surprising similarity—defection to idolatry, subjugation to their enemies, penitent cries for help, and deliverance by Judges ; and it concludes with two narratives, one describing the setting up of an independent Tabernacle at Dan, and the other relating how the tribe of Benjamin was almost extirpated by the rest of Israel in the course of a scarcely credible series of incidents.

The history of Judges represents the actual struggle that was carried on by the Church to maintain its hold on the affections of the Children of Israel, the Judges representing the Lord as to the various reformatory operations of the Divine Love and Wisdom in the varying circumstances under which the people fell away from their allegiance to Him, and were restored, temporarily at least, on their penitence.

Idolatry and forbidden alliance and intercourse of any kind with the Canaanitish people whom they were ordered to exterminate were the recurring sins of the Israelites settling in the promised land ; and whether the subject of reference is the Church in general or in the individual, deliverance from evil is attained by invoking the help of Divine Truth, the various Judges representing that quality of the Divine principle adequate to deal with the particular evil or falsity which has obtained domination over the mind and life, and from which deliverance is sought. Chronological sequence is neither attempted nor attained in the narrative. Incidents are related in such order as best pictures the inevitable course in the progress of the spiritual life.

The Book of Judges, with its idealistic impression of the conquest and settlement of Canaan followed by its

uncompromising description of how far from effective that conquest was, is but one act with various scenes in the dramatic representation of how the Children of Israel failed then, and spiritually fail now, to purge evils and falsities from the mind in order to receive and maintain the spiritual principles in their integrity that form the Church of the Lord, even although these have providentially been adapted to their particular receptive genius.

2. SAMUEL

Towards the close of the theocratic period in the history of the Children of Israel the functions of priest and ruler, performed by the early patriarchs, were again combined in one person in the case of Eli and Samuel as if to exhibit to the people the excellence of the system of government by which they enjoyed all the benefits of Divine rule under their Judge who was both priest and leader. The low state of the people, however, was reflected in the corruption of the house of Eli ; and when Samuel succeeded as Judge it was evident that his house would not maintain the honour and dignity which he himself had shown. Something lower than direct Divine rule was plainly the people's desire, and their demand for a king was the expression of their depraved state.

3. THE INSTITUTION OF THE MONARCHY

The account of the institution of the Monarchy as it is given in the first Book of Samuel (or as some prefer to name it, the first Book of Kings, omitting Samuel as a title and combining the Book of Samuel and Kings in one series, Kings i.-iv.), presents certain textual difficulties. These have suggested to critics that the Books of Samuel are a composite record ¹ from separate narratives giving

¹ See *Critical Introduction to Old Testament*, Gray, p. 69.

versions of the same incidents but so different as to be irreconcilable, thus destroying their value as authentic history. Some critics therefore, would omit some details and make certain rearrangements in the sequence to secure a more plausible or credible narrative. It must be gratefully acknowledged that textual criticism has performed invaluable service to Biblical study by tracing backwards towards original sources the text of our Bible in the popular Authorized Version. This version is now commonly accepted as containing the Word of God in the form in which its appeal is most universal. But, granted that this version not only here but in other places has been drawn from various sources, it does not follow that the text would be rendered more valuable to the Church by altering it. The difficulty of reconciling apparent differences in the record disappears as it is recognized that these are not differences that mutually contradict but that actually supplement each other. They serve the supreme purpose of the inner sense, which proceeds directly through the narrative, utilizing the incidents as they have been selected and recorded to ultimate in the simple language of quasi-history the spiritual experiences which it is the purpose of all Divine literature to portray.

As the circumstances that accompanied the appointing of the first king are considered from an interior point of view it will be seen that the exigencies of the spiritual content overrule for adequate reasons the seeming discrepancies of the Letter. The literal and local application of the story subordinates itself to the spiritual and universal purpose. When the people demanded a king the Lord acquiesced but conveyed to them through Samuel, who represents the Word, what their choice would entail. Through their disobedience to the Divine Will, which is the rule of love, and their consequent evil course of life, the people were imperilling not only their

existence as a nation but also the integrity of the Church entrusted to their keeping. A lower plane of life was opened up to them upon which that existence and that integrity might be conserved. A lower power, the rule of truth, which a king represents, was substituted for the rule of love—theocracy gave place to the monarchy.

In the interior consideration of the story the three accounts of the appointing of the first king take their necessary and natural place in the narrative. The first occasion was the anointing of Saul by Samuel, when Saul had reached the city of the Prophet in his search for the asses which had strayed. The loss of the asses represents in the inner sense the dearth of natural truth, the want of knowledge of Divine things and faith in them, in their lowest accessible form, namely in the spoken or written Word. The desire to regain this truth leads to the city where the Prophet dwells, and to the presentation of the gift that will secure an audience. This gift is the fourth part of a shekel of silver, five terahs, and its offering represents the presence in the mind of that minimum of truth which has been imbibed unconsciously in early years and its dedication to the service of the Lord. All the other circumstances that are recorded, culminating in the anointing of Saul as king, with the three signs following to confirm the Divine approval, faithfully represent the spiritual experiences that attend the acknowledgment of truth as the ruling principle in the Church and in the individual.

The second occasion was the choice of Saul by lot at Mizpeh. This manner of choice was recognized in ancient times as an appeal to the Deity, so that the decision was acknowledged as the will of God. The shout, "Live the King," which greeted Saul as the chosen of God is the expression of the general desire that truth, now elevated to the supreme seat of power, should have within it that love which alone can give it life and

reality. Saul went home to Gibeah accompanied by a band of valiant men, ready to defend the people when need should arise, just as the central truth is aided and supported by strong principles in the understanding when it begins to reign in the Church and in the minds of the faithful.

The third time Saul was made king was after the signal defeat of the Ammonites under his leadership. At the request of Samuel the people went to Gilgal and made Saul king before the Lord. This was the renewal and confirmation of his appointment by the anointing of Samuel and the choice by lot from the tribes. This election was different from the other two. These implied no direct choice or act by the people themselves, and the third appointment is the natural sequel to them. The people had desired a king : they now declared themselves satisfied with Sául. In the spiritual life this third appointment is in accordance with actual experience. The Church, as well as the individual, accepts the rule of truth as it is presented in the Word and as it appears sanctioned by the Divine Will. But after it has in actual life proved its worth and power to deliver from evil, the Church, as the Children of Israel renewed the kingship of Saul, submits to truth and establishes its reign in heart and life as a voluntary and confirmatory act. There is nothing redundant or unnecessary in the Biblical record of the three appointments of the first king. Each incident with its attendant detail is in its own proper place, and has its own proper significance in the spiritual purpose of the history.

Whatever principle rules in the human mind, in the Church, and thence in the world, it makes all things subservient to itself. Thus it is with the rule of truth. While, however, the rule of a king on the spiritual plane implies the supremacy of the intellect and the subordination of the things of the will, as affections of good,

emotions, and charitable feelings, yet the story of the first three kings¹ teaches that even in this degree of life progress is possible. Saul represents the domination of truth in its lowest outer form, the literal injunctions of the Letter, carried out from principles of unquestioning obedience. He was followed by David, who represents truth obeyed from a higher principle, truth that is obeyed because it is understood, and therefore lived from a deeper sense of responsibility. Solomon represents truth obeyed from the highest principle of all—because it is loved. So that, although their plane of life was relatively low, yet the Children of Israel under the Monarchy reached, to outward appearance, great moral heights as well as great heights of national glory and splendour, which correspond to the intellectual advancement that is always open to the spiritual Israelite.

In the early days of the Monarchy the Jewish nation made rapid growth in national power and political influence with surrounding nations. So substantial was the progress made in the acquisition of national resources and in the extension of the national boundaries that there was every prospect of an enduring sovereignty for the Jews ; and such was the nature of their vision for the future of their nation that they beheld its highest glory in the realization of material splendour and worldly power. This agrees with the outlook of the Church of which their nation was the representative : it represents the spiritual outlook of the Israelite whose ideal is the development of the natural man and the pursuit of truth as his ruling principle. The splendid and spectacular advances that are made on this plane of life, desirable as they are in themselves, are apt to obscure the fact that the plane on which the monarchy is the system of rule is a comparatively lowly one. It is, moreover, by nature particularly subject to relapses into which the Jewish

¹ See *The First Three Kings of Israel*. Bruce.

nation easily fell, to their own destruction as a nation and to the consummation of the Church established with them.

The Word always maintains the sequence upward from lowest to highest, or downward from highest to lowest, through the celestial, spiritual and natural planes of life which is demanded by the development of its spiritual purpose. In the story of the first three kings of Israel it relates on the plane of the natural man, which is the plane of the Jewish nation as the custodian of the Jewish Church, outstanding instances of the national frailty pictured in the lives of the kings which rendered decadence and ultimate consummation inevitable. Such instances may be noted in the three stages of progress through which the nation advanced under the monarchy, corresponding in all details to the development of the spiritual Israelites in analogous circumstances.

(i) *Saul*

It is recorded in 1 Sam. xv., that Saul was ordered to destroy the Amalekites. He failed to carry out the Divine command. He spared Agag their king, and preserved the best of the spoil at the desire of the people, in order to sacrifice them to God. As a result of his disobedience he was told that the kingdom would be taken from him.

The nations against whom the Children of Israel fought represent the spiritual principles which the Church in general, and in the individual in particular, must oppose; and the Amalekites represent a principle which must be completely destroyed if the Church would be firmly established or the human soul regenerated. This principle is falsity grounded in interior evil (See *Arcana Caelestia* 8593). It is the falsity which cloaks evil deep-rooted in the soul, with simulated honesty, justice

and neighbourly love. This falsity can be defeated by the natural truth of the written or spoken Word, as the Amalekites were by the Israelites led by Saul ; but it is not exterminated from the mind when the natural man does not hold to the truth as he knows it with whole-hearted determination. When there still persists a love of the evil which must be destroyed, this lurking affinity with that evil results in disobedience to the Divine command. In the language of the Letter the kingdom is taken from Saul ; but in reality, in the universal language of the inner sense, the Divine rule is rejected by the rebellious Israelite.

(2) *David*

Although this was the state of the Jewish Church and nation when Saul died, the phase of truth which he represented gave place to a re-birth of truth of the higher degree represented by David. In the course of spiritual development, as has been noted already, truth is presented first in the outer form of spoken or written Law, which is obeyed through submission to dogmatic authority. This is the truth which rules when Saul is king. It is followed by the truth which rules in the kingdom of David—truth which appeals to a higher degree of intellectuality and spirituality, truth which has passed the test of reason, is understood, and rests on the rational foundation of sincere conviction. Such truth can conquer all the falsities which oppose the spiritual Israel as David conquered all the enemies of his country. But David's reign was marred by personal incidents which typified shortcomings in the national life and representatively in the life of the Church, and David was forbidden to build a house for the Ark.

In the Letter the reply to David given from the Lord by Nathan does not appear to give a reason for the prohibition ; and the reason as given by Solomon

(1 Kings v. 3) does not appear quite satisfactory, for David no doubt felt equal to the task of building the house as well as subduing his enemies. In the spiritual sense, however, the reply of Nathan and the reason given by Solomon are complementary, and constitute the perfectly adequate reason for the prohibition. When Nathan reported to David the Word of the Lord :

“ He (Solomon) shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever,”

it was an intimation that the kingdom of David lacked the essential element of permanence. It was an intimation that truth, if only based on understanding and directing motive from rational conviction, must give place in spiritual development to truth based on love and directing motive from wisdom. It was an intimation that the kingdom of truth in a lower form must give place to the kingdom of truth in its highest form—the rule of the Law which is obeyed from love, reigning in unbroken peace, eternal in the heavens. This is the kingdom represented by the rule of Solomon at the height of his glory.

(3) *Solomon*

The splendour of the national achievements under Solomon was reflected in the magnificence attained by the Jewish Church. The worship of the One God in the grandeur of His One Temple marked the climax of the religious life of the Jewish Monarchy. That the high level of national and church life was not maintained was not due to any defect in the spiritual principles which were figured in the life of the priests and people. The Unity of the Godhead was the central fact in the Jewish religious system : but idolatry was the cardinal vice of the people. Solomon, having brought within reach the

conditions essential for the loftiest expression of the national as well as of the religious life now possible for the Children of Israel, himself gave way to the national sin of idolatry and its attendant evils. In his later years, reflecting the state of the people, he introduced the elements of decadence which heralded the end of the nation and the consummation of the Church. The spiritual sense of the Divine record of the closing years of Solomon, free from the grossness which attends the literal story, shows how the Divine Love in the Church's extremity makes provision for the regeneration not only of the Israelite who seeks it, but also of the Gentile who, living in accordance with the truth as it appears to him, is affirmative to the reception of truth as it really is.

As kings of Israel, which represents the kingdom of truth on the plane of the natural man, acting in obedience to the Word of God as revealed to them, Saul, David and Solomon represent the Lord whose kingdom reaches down to and includes the kingdom of the Spiritual Israel. As men, however, they were still free to act upon their own responsibility. Thus they might be guilty of acts reprehensible in themselves or even criminal, depending on the moral standards by which they might be judged. Their representative function did not override their personal character. According to the law of representatives (see *Arcana Caelestia* 1361) the things which were represented in the Jewish Church, and throughout the Word, are the Lord and His Kingdom, that is, the celestial things of love and the spiritual things of faith. The things which represent are either persons or things in the world, whatever is an object of the senses. It is a principle of representation that the person or thing which bears the representation is not at all reflected on, but only that which is represented. Thus every king in Judah, in Israel, or even in Egypt and elsewhere might represent the Lord,

their regal function being representative of itself. Even the very worst of kings might sustain this representation: it was involved in the ceremony of anointing them. Their personal character, however, was not involved in their representative character. They were responsible for breaches of the Law in their personal capacity; but in the cases recorded in the Word these deeds also reflect the spiritual life of the Church or Nation, acting contrary to the spirit of the Divine things represented. For all things in the Word have a good or an opposite signification according to the spiritual purpose of their use.

The formula relating the beginning of Baasha's reign is as follows :

- 1 Kings xv. 33. In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.
- 34. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam.

The full formula describing the conclusion of a king's reign, whether of Judah or of Israel, includes :

- 1. The source in which further information may be obtained,
- 2. The king's death and burial,
- 3. The name of his successor.

The formula describing the close of the reign of Jehoshaphat is interrupted by the relation of additional details, and is as follows :

- 1 Kings xxii. 45. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat and his might that he showed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah ?
- 50. And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father : and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

In the case of kings of Israel the words " was buried with his fathers " are never used.¹ The reason for the omission is indicated on p. 146.

Other deviations from these formulae are also found. There is an unusual example of a portion of the closing formula appearing in the opening one as well. In mentioning the accession of Jehoash king of Israel,

¹ The omission of these words from the concluding formula for kings of Israel is particularly noted by Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 176.

2 Kings xiii. 10, 11, 12, there is repeated a portion of the closing formula, 2 Kings xiv. 15.

Yet another source from which the compiler may have derived much of the material used in the Book descriptive of the Temple is the collection of records concerning the Temple and preserved within it.

It is probable that the composition of the Book was completed shortly after the fall of the Monarchy in Judah and the Exile, 588. It specifies the duration of the reign of Zedekiah, the last king, 598–588, who died a captive in Babylon, and also the release from prison in Babylon of Jehoiachin after thirty-seven years' captivity, 561, is described at the close of the last chapter, 2 Kings xxv. 27–30.

The Exile represents the consummation stage of the Jewish Church ; and whilst the restoration of Jehoiachin to freedom and comfort may seem an inconclusive ending to the history of the Jewish nation as recorded in the Word yet it fully and adequately represents the last phase in the life of that Church : rather, it describes how spiritual life is maintained, till a new Church is established, for the sincere spiritual Israelite, when the Church which should have been his guide has reached its consummation.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEPARATION

The Revolt of the Ten Tribes, although a unique event in Israelitish history, yet represents on the spiritual plane an experience similar to one already passed through by the preceding Church, but it is depicted in the Word in the symbolic or non-historic narrative in which the early portion of the Word is written. The experience is described in the story of the Flood. In the Most Ancient Church the will and the understanding were united and acted as one. Man acted from the principle of love or goodness, and truth was perceived and

instinctively understood, and its direction was followed without question. At the consummation of the Most Ancient Church the will was corrupted. Evil was its good, and as a consequence the understanding was corrupted also. Truth was now falsified, for the understanding was under the power of the corrupt will, acting in unison with it. Truth was no longer seen to be truth, falsity being preferred.

In order that man should not bring about his own moral and spiritual destruction it was provided by the Lord that the understanding should be separated from the will, so that man could act from the understanding independently of the will. The will continued in its corrupt form and could not now be restored. The understanding could now operate as an independent faculty. Truth was recognized by the intellect when presented in a rational form, and in place of the old corrupt will there was formed in the regenerating man what is known as Conscience. This was built up from a knowledge of truth as understood by man, and served as the inner motive power in place of, and even in antagonism to, the former ruling will. Thus spiritual man, the man of the Noatic Church, lived his regenerating life under the direction of truth and attained his *summum bonum* according to the purity of the Conscience he formed for himself. In the Letter of the Word this separation of the two faculties, the will and the understanding, and the elevation of the understanding to act as a faculty independent of the will, is described in Gen. viii. 6, where it is stated that Noah opened the window of the Ark. The Celestial or Adamic Church had reached its consummation. A new plane of life, as it were, was opened up for the man who wished to reform, and the Noatic Church was established that regeneration might be possible on a lower plane for spiritual man.

An analogous situation arose when the natural

Jewish Church, in its final phase as represented by the Monarchy, had allowed its will to be corrupted. This was represented by the declension of Solomon. The will, which had attained such a predominant influence for good in the Jewish Church as was typified by the splendour of Solomon's reign at the height of its glory became corrupted beyond the possibility of restoration, just as Solomon's kingdom dwindled away: and if man had to be saved from moral and spiritual destruction he had to be freed from the domination of a corrupt will in the spiritual life. As in the case of the Noatic Church the understanding had to be separated from the power of the will: the life had to be regulated by truth presented in such a way as to be understood and followed. The two faculties of the human mind—the will and the understanding, which act as one when the higher life is lived—had to be separated that man might be saved for the lower life, by submitting to the rule of truth in the understanding. This is represented by the separation of the kingdom into two independent realms. The Ten Northern Tribes, representing the understanding with truth as the ruling power, revolted and denied the right of the two Southern Tribes representing the will (that is, good as the ruling power or evil when good has become corrupt) to exercise dominion over them. This new understanding, which has acquired wisdom based on intelligence derived from knowledge, now acts independently of the will, in conjunction with the newly formed Conscience which is regulated by truth received and assimilated by the understanding.

When the national disintegration of Israel is considered in its inner application all the incidents related in the Letter of the Word are seen to have been recorded in view of the development of the Church and of the individual when the corresponding crucial stage has been reached in the spiritual life.

3. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE DUAL MONARCHY

(I) *Jeroboam an Ephraimite*

It is a notable circumstance that the Revolt of the Ten Tribes was led by Jeroboam, who set up his capital at Shechem, in Ephraim, for he was an Ephraimite. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were descendants of the sons of Joseph, represent comprehensively in themselves all the spiritual principles of the Church. Ephraim represents those of the understanding, relating to truth and the activities of the intellect, while Manasseh represents those of the will, relating to good and the activities of the voluntary faculty. Therefore, when the celestial principle of the Jewish Church, which had been grounded in good, became corrupted, as was represented by the declension of Solomon in the historical narrative, it was in accord with the parallel record in the spiritual sense that the leader of the revolt should come from the tribe of Ephraim. The understanding based on intellectual activity from acquired knowledge, that is, the spiritual principle, was henceforth to rule, although the celestial principle was not to be destroyed, for it was provided that the tribe of Judah was to be preserved under the descendants of Solomon. The Divine provision for reformation and regeneration when the spiritual principle has been exalted to the ruling place in the life is assuringly described in the charge given to Jeroboam by Ahijah, the Prophet and representative of the Lord, 1 Kings xi. 38 :

"And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight to keep my statutes and my commandments as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee."

In the inner sense is here described how the faithful in the religious life, no longer being led by the corrupt will to evil, are exhorted to obey the voice of Conscience that now takes the place of the old will. For Conscience is formed by hearkening to the Word of the Lord, and it leads to that state of good represented by the "sure house built by the Lord."

From this point onwards through the long line of the kings of Israel and of Judah the Book in its inner sense describes the spiritual life of the Jewish Church, a religious life that was dominated now by the more or less corrupt will and now by the perverted understanding, till it was finally extinguished. Truth in the understanding is described as the first to succumb, overborne by the overwhelming pressure of Godless Reason, as Israel was led into captivity by Assyria; although salvation was still rendered possible for the faithful in whom was retained the capacity to become good: 2 Kings xvii. 18:

"Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah only."

Finally there perished even that saving grace. The capacity for good was destroyed, overcome by the infernal lust of dominion, to which the practice of unbridled evil inevitably leads (for spiritual history repeats itself whenever similar circumstances arise in the human soul), and Judah became captive to Babylon: 2 Kings xxv. 21:

"And the king of Babylon smote them. . . . So Judah was carried away captive out of his land."

(2) "*was buried with his fathers*"

It is a matter of constant wonder, particularly in the case of Books that bear the mark of history, if no regard

is paid to the inner content, that apparently trivial details find a place in the Divine narrative while accounts of what must, presumably, have been of greater historical importance are omitted. It must be remembered, however, that the literal accounts have been selected and arranged for the Divine purpose of the spiritual sense, and not with historical fulness or even interest as the end in view. Thus the use of the seemingly unimportant words "was buried with his fathers" in the closing formula relating to kings of Judah only, is fully justified when the inner sense of the words is seen in its context.

The words "slept with his fathers" represents awakening to the life of the spirit and entering upon immortality to be passed in the company of those who are like-minded. This is the birthright of all, evil and good alike, whether their lives have been grounded in evil and falsity, or in goodness and truth. Thus the words are used both of kings of Judah and of Israel. But when the words: "was buried with his fathers" are used another phase of spiritual life is represented. There is a kind of immortality—life eternal—which is enjoyed only by the regenerate, and is the goal of those who press on towards regeneration. Their resurrection is a rising to a new state of good. In the case of the kings of Judah some aspect of the state of the Church is signified when the reference is to the will, thus to a new state when love to the Lord or charity to the neighbour predominates over the power of truth in the understanding to direct the life. The opposite of these qualities, or these qualities in a perverted state, are signified when the close of the reign of a wicked king is related. Thus to describe the entry into a new phase in the spiritual life of the Church or of the individual, whether this step be progressive or retrogressive, but grounded in good (or evil), it is said of the king of Judah that "he slept with

his fathers, and was buried with his fathers." Only the first of these statements can be used of kings of Israel, for they represent that phase of the Church's life, general and particular, which is grounded in truth.

It cannot be too often noted that truth performs two distinct functions in the life of regeneration. In the first place it serves as a guide leading to goodness. The regenerating man first acquires a knowledge of truth, summarized for all circumstances of life in the Decalogue. By means of this knowledge he strives after goodness, which does not at first qualify his life. When, however, he makes goodness the ruling principle of his life, the truth he has acquired and the faith he has formed change their character and function. His truth becomes united to good, his faith to love. Henceforth his truth is no longer merely a means and an instrument to attain to good, but it becomes a means and an instrument by which good works out its own purposes in life.

Such is the distinction that the Word draws in the progress of the spiritual life which is represented in the Separation of the kingdoms. And the frequent iteration of the same words, with the same variations for the kings of the two kingdoms, is an earnest of the Divine solicitude and provision for the salvation of men in their varying states and conditions. The phraseology in the Letter of the Word shows oft-repeated statements ; and in the spiritual sense there are gradations to mark the various stages in the retrogression in the spiritual life of the Church, for decadence is the prevailing note in the history ; but the literal expression of these gradations is subject to the same limitations of vocabulary that necessitate the use of repetition in the Letter.¹

¹ See Maclagan, *The Two Books of Kings Explained*, and Bruce, *The First Three Kings of Israel*, for particular reference to the Lord's works of Redemption and Glorification.

4. THE CLOSE OF THE HISTORICAL WORD

With the Book of Kings the historical part of the Word of the Old Testament comes to an end. The Word has been concerned with the Jewish nation and has utilized its history and its literature only in so far as that nation was the outward guardian of the Jewish Church, and could furnish the prophetic ground on which to base the promise of a greater Church to come. These Divine purposes the Israelites were able to serve because they readily incorporated into their national life the political, social and religious laws by which the representative of a Church could become the ultimate medium of the Divine Presence among men. When that Church, by corrupting good through practising a life of evil, and by perverting truth through preferring falsity, failed to reconcile its practices with the Divine principles entrusted to it, it came to an end. The Jewish nation, which had in the development of its national history represented the spiritual rise and fall of the Jewish Church, ceased, by compassing its own destruction, to have that peculiar significance in religious history which had marked it out as a special nation. It now took its place as one of the nations of the world, to earn with them a national existence commensurate with its national resources and aspirations, but no longer entitled to claim any Divine favour that other nations might not enjoy. Hence its subsequent history bears no special spiritual significance, and the rest of the Books of the Old Testament (excepting the Psalms and the Prophets) can have no spiritual sense, essential to the spiritual continuity and unity of the Word. They still remain in the major canon of the Bible, of great historical and literary value, and of outstanding importance in the sphere of comparative religion.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PROPHETS. I.

I. PROPHETIC LITERATURE.

2. ISAIAH.
 - a. Traditional ; 758-698 B.C.
 - b. Modern, Ch. I.-XXXIX. ; 740-698.
 - c. Deutero-Isaiah, Ch. XL.-LXVI. ; c. 549.
- (1) The Triumph of Assyria, or False Reasoning over the Principles of Truth. Ch. I.-XXXIX.
- (2) The Threat of Babylon, the Profanation of Good. Ch. XL.-LIX.
- (3) The Final Triumph of the Church Assured. Ch. LX.-LXVI.
- (4) Modern Biblical Research and the Authorship of Isaiah.

I. PROPHETIC LITERATURE

“THE Law and the Prophets” is the comprehensive designation for the Word of the Old Testament, and while Moses represents the Lord as to the Law, Elijah represents the Lord as to Prophecy. By the prophetic literature of the Word, however, is generally meant those Books which bear the names of Prophets, and are supposed to embody their teachings as well as autobiographical notes concerning them, and narratives in which they play some part. These Books have been preserved by the Jews in the Hebrew Bible in four collections named respectively Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and The Twelve Minor Prophets. To the Major Prophets Daniel¹ has been added in our Bible from the Sacred Writings of the Hebrew Bible owing to the influence of the Septuagint, in which that Book is placed after Ezekiel and before The Twelve.

When these Books are examined from the historical point of view, the difficulties and the differences between various schools of thought diminish rather than increase the value that can be placed upon them as historical

¹ See Ch. v., p. 38.

records, and their teaching stands out more and more definitely as the purpose of their preservation. That teaching, however, if it is based only on the Letter of the Books, is so elusive and enigmatic as to be of as little worth to-day as the historical content. The vague generalities and the darkly veiled spiritual concepts had a certain value for the times when they were first delivered, but the Letter can have little bearing on the life and thought of to-day. It must be evident that if the whole body of prophetic literature of the Old Testament is to have any meaning that is worth while to modern times it must be viewed in a new light. This new light must be directed not on the scarcely historical and mainly legendary persons of the Prophets but on the function they perform in the great spiritual drama of life.

A Prophet is a Prophet only in so far as he represents the Lord as to Divine Truth. What he says, what he writes, what he describes, what he does, is a revelation of truth adapted to the state of the Church to which the revelation is made. The spiritual content of prophecy is a reflex of the attitude towards the truth and life according to it which is adopted by the Church, here the Jewish Church, the Church of the natural man ; and as every individual may be regarded as a Church in miniature, prophecy is valid not only for the Jewish Church but also universally, wherever the spiritual states represented by it are experienced. The message of the Prophets, whether it be to admonish, encourage or promise, whatever its effect on those to whom it was originally delivered, is only appreciated as the literal records—often of doubtful intrinsic worth—are translated into their spiritual equivalence. It will be evident also that to speculate on the understanding of the message by the Prophet is beside the point. The message conveys its own import, irrespective of the depth of the Prophet's under-

standing of it, as well as irrespective of whether the final writer of it has, or has not, been historically vouched for as the Prophet whose name the message bears.

Thus the promised restoration of the Kingdom is a visionary restoration, though the expectancy of its literal fulfilment prolonged till the day of the Lord's coming the flickering flame of the Jewish Church and nation. The Prophet in his vision sees what *is* in the timeless now. The interval between the present and the future fulfilment of prophecy represents the change of state that must take place in those to whom the prophecy is delivered. The Kingdom of Truth, and the glories of the visionary Jerusalem were not to be created some time after the Prophet "foretold" their coming. The preparation for "that day" was on the part of those who received the prophecy. The reality of the spiritual Kingdom always *is*, although relative to those who belong to it. Prophecy concerning that Kingdom is a revelation of existing fact, which persists into the future, as it has persisted from the past, and ultimates itself in outward forms appropriate to the circumstances of the time: the Prophet's vision is into the present. The thought-forms into which the vision is cast are the forms his hearers can in some measure understand, and the nearness or remoteness of the fulfilment of the prophecy is the measure of the state of preparation for it in which the faithful are.

"In my Father's house are many mansions,"

is our Lord's assurance of the ever-present reality of His Kingdom, equally true of the past and of the future. It is always "here," visible to the Prophet, for all who will enter, however speedy or prolonged their preparation may be.

2. ISAIAH

1. Traditional view: (a) 758-698 B.C.
 2. Modern view: (b) Ch. i.-xxxix; 740-698 B.C.
(c) Deut.-Isa. Ch. xl.-lxvi:
c. 549 B.C.

Isaiah received his call in the last year of the reign of Uzziah, c. 758 B.C., modern chronology, and prophesied in Jerusalem in the reigns of three succeeding kings, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. There are few recorded particulars of his life. He is supposed to have been of royal descent and to have been martyred in the reign of Manasseh, c. 698 B.C.

He is the Prophet of the remnant, or the faithful, of the Gentiles who have hitherto been in ignorance of the Word, foretelling the coming of the Lord and the establishment of a new Church, when all good and truth has been completely destroyed in the Jewish Church. Thus Isaiah pre-eminently represents the Lord as to His Incarnation and His work of Redemption; and this explains why by common consent Isaiah comes closer to the Gospels than any other prophecy. Moreover, his prophecy is a testimony to the close conjunction which must exist between the things of the will and those of the understanding, or between the things of love and the things of faith, or, what is the same thing, between things celestial and things spiritual. It is customary with the Prophets, and especially with Isaiah, to express everything in a twofold manner,¹ one expression having relation to the celestial principle or good, and the other to the spiritual principle or truth. (See *Arcana Caelestia* 2173.)

¹ Dualism or Parallelism, Ch. vi., p. 48, and Ch. x., p. 90.

(I) *The Triumph of Assyria or Falsity over the Principles of Truth*, Ch. i.-xxxix.

Section I. Ch. i.-xii.

The first chapter of the Book is an introductory and comprehensive prophecy, supplying the keynote to the whole Book. In this chapter the Prophet declares that the Church has reached a state in which neither goodness nor truth has a place—except with a few, the remnant who are a guarantee of the continuance of the life of religion in the world. The formal religion of external worship avails nothing : repentance alone will restore the Church to the good of life ; but as the Church has falsified the truth of the Word and destroyed the possibility of reformation, the Lord will establish His Church with others.

This section treats mainly of Israel and Judah, telling how the Church will depart from its Divine principles in favour of the love of self and pride in its own self-intelligence. The call of Isaiah contains the spiritual declaration that the Lord is in the midst of His Word, but that understanding of the Word would perish through adulteration of its truths, although a remnant would maintain its purity. Perversion of the Word is brought about by false reasoning, represented by Assyria, acting upon a mere knowledge of its Letter, represented by Egypt. Decadence in the Church is described through unwillingness to accept the Word in its simplicity, and the coming of the Lord is declared with the new Church in which He will be received, and the destruction of the Jewish Church.

In the Church's decline from its standards of goodness and truth special emphasis is laid on the perverting influence of reasoning from self-intelligence, Assyria, and on reliance upon mere knowledge of the Letter of the Word, Egypt. Then follows the glorious prophecy of

the Lord's advent, when He will judge from Divine Wisdom, save the faithful and destroy the unfaithful. The section ends with a hymn of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord for his salvation.

Section II. Ch. xiii.-xxiii.

These chapters are prophecies dealing in the literal sense with foreign nations. In the spiritual sense they deal with the evils and falsities in their relation to the Church to which these nations correspond, when described as hostile to Israel and to the God of Israel. Although certain nations, as Assyria and Egypt, have already been referred to by the Prophet (Ch. vii. 10), they are again dealt with in their own place in this series of prophecies. This series brings into one general survey all the outstanding representative subversive principles adherence to which contributes to the downfall of the Church. At the head of these nations stands Babylon.

This section, therefore, is first concerned with the adulteration of good and the profanation of truth. When these evils prevail, the Church is dominated by the lust of dominion, represented by Babylon. The prophecy declares that the Lord will come to bring about the spiritual destruction of this evil love and of all who are in it. The promise of a new Church is repeated, and it is declared that those also will perish who from self-intelligence by false reasoning, or Assyria, profane the truth of the Word. Then follow the judgments upon the other nations in their order : upon Palestina, the land of the Philistines, who make salvation a matter of faith alone : upon Moab, whose people reject the good works of charity and pervert to evil uses what in the Church should contribute to good : upon Damascus, a commercial centre, whose inhabitants place religion in acquiring knowledge : upon Cush or Ethiopia, whose people, although within the Church, remain in ignorance

regarding the things of salvation ; the prophecy promises however that those in ignorance of the things of religion, who are outside the Church, but in goodwill, and who approach the Lord in His coming, can be received into the Church. The judgment upon Egypt, whose people make a religion of the mere knowledge of things relating to the Church and the Word, follows and it also is tempered by a merciful qualification of the Divine Providence. For while the principle of Egypt in the Church leads to controversies and heresies, yet it is promised that if such as are represented by the Egyptians will submit to instruction in spiritual things, then the spiritual principle in the natural man, or Israel, the rational principle, Assyria, and the scientific principle, Egypt, can act in concert, and promote the advancement of the spiritual life. Unfortunately the decadence of the Church is a progressive fact. The Prophet foresees the time when all good and truth will have perished and the Jewish Church has been destroyed. He describes the changes to be wrought consequent on the coming of the Lord, and one of these changes is the fall of Babylon.

The last prophecy of this section declares that the Church will be deprived of every knowledge of good and truth. This knowledge is here represented by Tyre, another commercial centre but maritime, and its destruction will be the result of reasoning from falsity, or Assyria ; and it is promised that this knowledge will fall to others when the Lord comes.

Section III. Ch. xxiv.-xxvii.

In this section the prophecy is couched in figures widely varied but consonant with the social customs and political life of the people. The language is more ideal and symbolic in character than usual while the inner content rises and falls in regular cadence as warning of spiritual destruction to the faithless is followed by

promise of salvation to the faithful. Although the text affords no clue to any particular historical circumstances which might have been the occasion of the prophecy there is no need to regard it as other than the work of Isaiah, whose prophetic spirit is plainly discerned throughout. The allusions to the countries named—Moab, Egypt, Assyria, have no specific historical significance, but refer to the spiritual evils which these nations represent.

The section opens with a prophecy declaring what will happen when the Church has entirely lost its principles of good and truth, but that a faithful remnant, as well as those without the Church who will receive instruction from the Lord, will be accepted into the new Church then to be established. There follows a confession of the Lord, and of His care for those who wait upon Him and the promise that those who profane the good and truth of the Word, Moab, will be destroyed. This is succeeded by a prophecy extolling the doctrine of truth which men shall receive at the coming of the Lord, with the benefits to be derived by those who will be instructed in truth, and the fate of those who prefer to remain in falsity. This portion of the prophecy closes with the promise that although the destruction of the Jewish Church will be effected yet the truth itself will be preserved ; and the cadence again rises to the vision of the new Church which will acknowledge the Lord. It touches in passing with true poetic fervour upon the salvation of those for whom “ he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.” And the countries, Egypt and Assyria, are mentioned as the false principles from which the remnant shall be rescued.

Section IV. Ch. xxviii.—xxxiii.

Throughout this portion of the prophecy are described the efforts of those in falsity to dominate the Church.

How these efforts are opposed by the Divine Truth of the Lord is also described. Although the influence of the truth is of little avail with the Church as a whole, it does move the faithful to follow the Lord and receive salvation when all good and truth in the Church will have perished.

The Prophet declares that truths will perish with those who from self-intelligence have falsified truth. These are the "drunkards of Ephraim," and although the teaching of Divine Truth accompanies the Lord when He comes yet they will persistently reject it. The lost doctrine of the Church, which is represented by Ariel, shall be destroyed and falsity will prevail till the old Church comes to an end and the new Church is established in which those who receive the Lord will learn of Him.

Then follows in a pseudo-historical setting a declaration against those whose religious life is subject to the two great false principles represented by Egypt and Assyria. Those who trust to Egypt place the all of religion in the mere knowledge of the things of the Church and the exercise of their own self-intelligence, while those who look to Assyria regard reasoning, but from falsity, as the substance of religion. Their fate is described, but those who trust in the Lord will have truth and wisdom in abundance, and will enter into the delights that attend goodness and truth. Under somewhat similar figures the Prophet repeats the stern denunciation of those who trust in their knowledge and in their own reasoning, and renews the promise of entry into the new Church to those who reject falsities and the evils to which they lead.

The reign of the Lord in His new Church is described as the reign of Divine Truth, where simulation will have no place. Nevertheless the influence of Divine principles will entirely cease in the Jewish Church, save with those

who remain in goodness and truth ; and under His reign the faithful will be protected from those who would despoil the Church of its principles. They, however, who reject the false and do good will abide in the safety and prosperity of His new Church.

Section V. Ch. xxxiv.-xxxv.

This section is the complementary parallel of the last, and for that reason may well be regarded as the work of that Isaiah to whom the earlier prophecies are attributed.

The Prophet now directs his denunciation against those in the Church who are in evil and thence pervert the truth to falsity to justify their evil life. These are represented by Idumea, or Edom, and by Bozrah is represented the Divine Truth which they falsify. Their fate is pictured in lurid figures, but felicity is promised to those who have not profaned the good.

The faithful who have not perverted the truth nor profaned the good have in these two sections of the prophecy been promised a place in the Lord's new Church. The beautiful Chapter xxxv., now holds out the same blessing to the Gentiles, those who are not of the Church and who have not the Word but who are attracted to the Lord. The promise to them is that they also will become part of the new Church and acquire all that it can offer to the faithful.

Section VI. Ch. xxxvi.-xxxix.

In his *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Dr. Driver states (p. 214) the case for the two suggestions of Modern Research that this section is mainly an excerpt by a later writer than the personal Isaiah from the Book of Kings (2 Kings xviii.-xx.), and that the historical setting also betokens a later writer. The reader, however, is referred to MacLagan, *The Two Books of Kings Explained*, for a detailed exposition of 2 Kings xviii.-xx., and the

justification for the inclusion of this portion of Kings in this prophecy of Isaiah will be appreciated. It is generally agreed that a portion of the prophecy, Ch. xxxvii. 22-32, is the work of the earlier writer. It will be observed, however, that although the prophecy may appear to have been compiled from various sources by various hands the ultimate compiler has been led to compose an adequate setting for the continuous spiritual sense.

As though to emphasize the difficulties that await the faithful and the remnant who are to form the new Church promised at the conclusion of the last section the Prophet again pictures the dangerous powers that assail the Church. He again raises his warning voice, declaring that reasoning from falsity, Assyria, and mere knowledge, Egypt, were being allowed to destroy the religious life, and even representative worship in the Church. Yet he promises that blasphemy, now prevalent against the Lord, will not prevail in the end. The repentant are encouraged by the Prophet to believe that help against their enemies will be forthcoming, no matter how strongly these enemies continue to blaspheme, and that the coming of the new Church is certain though it will be delayed till the destruction of the present Jewish Church is completed.

Whilst the possibility of the salvation of the repentant remains the triumph of false reason will be providentially protracted, though it means that the coming of the Divine Truth and the new age will be delayed.¹ Hezekiah's song of thanksgiving bears witness to the spiritual joy that follows repentance, and his cure by means of the fig is the assurance that not only is there truth left leading to repentance but that simple natural good is

¹ This is the meaning of the retrogression of the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz. Ch. xxxviii., 6, 7, 8. See *Peculiarities of the Bible*, Rendell, p. 346.

still a redeeming factor in the lives of the faithful. Notwithstanding the powerful influences that are working for good in the Church the Prophet predicts that the Church itself will proceed to the ultimate adulteration of all the good of the Word and the profanation of all its truth. When this state is reached then the Church will perish, overwhelmed in the captivity of Babylon. Yet again the Prophet concludes with the challenge, as it were, thrown out in love, to the Church to stay its course to destruction.

Section VII. Ch. xl.-lxvi. Generally attributed
to Deutero-Isaiah

(2) *The Threat of Babylon, the Profanation of Good.*
Ch. xl.-lix.

The Division of the Book into sections has been adopted for convenience in reference. While it suits the grouping of the various portions into what are attributed by modern critics to Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah, and even Trito-Isaiah, to whom some critics attribute Ch. lvi.-lxvi., the spiritual sequence does not always observe the sectional classification of the chapters.

The prophecy now appears to assume another aspect. Hitherto it has been mainly concerned with the gradual but persistent overthrow of truth by falsity, under the direction of perverted reason. False reasoning has prevailed. Assyria has triumphed: the Northern Kingdom, the Church as to truth, has been led into captivity. The Church as to good, however, has also been coming under the influence of the companion evil principle. Babylon has been gaining the ascendancy over the Kingdom of Judah. The profanation of the good has been undermining the will principle in the Church. The destruction of the good has not yet been complete, and the prophecy is now concerned mainly with the promise

of salvation for the faithful good and for the Gentiles, those outwith the Jewish Church, when the oft-heralded advent of the Lord should take place. For from the spiritual point of view of the Jewish Church, the rising domination of evil as represented by Babylon is now as real and actual to the Prophet as that represented by the captivity of Assyria, although it was not to ultimate itself in outward historical fact till two centuries later. The prophecy, taking little account of the historical time-factor, is concerned mainly with the state of the Church dominated by the corrupt principle of good profaned, although the equally corrupt principle of perverted truth is never out of view—a state of decadence which is strikingly contrasted with the glories of the rule of the Divine Truth, in the person of the Messiah, whose coming as Jehovah Himself for the redemption of the human race is proclaimed in the most magnificent chapters of Old Testament Scripture.

(a) Ch. xl.—xlviii.

The first portion of the prophecy, Ch. I.—xxxix., has ended with the prediction that Babylon will prevail over the Church, but this section opens with the promise that the Lord Himself will come with salvation for the repentant. Although all truth should perish from the Church yet it is declared that His truth shall stand, omnipotent against those who trust in their own self-intelligence, and that the Church to be formed at His coming will be from those hitherto ignorant of truth. This theme is continued under various figures, now setting forth the gentle, long-suffering influence of Divine Truth to lead and to guide, and now declaring its might, as represented by Cyrus, to overthrow the old Church with its evils and falsities and to establish the new. It is further prophesied that the only hope of salvation is in the Lord, who is Jehovah, the only God, and from His

Word, from which the truths of religion must be taken. The Church which bases its worship on truth perverted, or Bel, and on good profaned, or Babylon, shall be destroyed ; and to the Jewish Church the Prophet makes a moving appeal to renounce the evil and falsity which are surely bringing about its destruction.

(b) Ch. xlix.-lix.

Again the Prophet proclaims the redemption and salvation of the faithful and of the Gentiles, as the Church itself has been rejected. The new Church to be formed at the coming of the Lord is once more warned of the dangers of intellectualism, the false principles represented by Egypt and Assyria ; and contrasted with these is set forth the omnipotent power of Divine Truth. This the Church has despised and rejected in the Prophet's own day ; and, looking into the future, he sees, as something already accomplished, the crucifixion of that Truth, the Word made flesh, the Man of Sorrows.

The spread of truth with the Coming of the Lord is widely assured, but the evil in the Church which perverts the truth and profanes the good is condemned. Although the Church maintains a worship which is a mere pretence, it is warned that conversion does not consist in speaking devoutly but in shunning evils and in exercising charity—that is, in the good of life. True worship belongs to the Lord, whose truth overcomes all the evil and falsity of His enemies and remains to eternity.

(3) *The Final Triumph of the Church Assured.*

(c) Ch. lx.-lxvi.

The Book concludes with a series of prophecies extolling the glories of the advent of the Lord and the heavenly nature of the Church to be established by Him.

His victories over the powers of evil and falsity will be wrought by means of the Divine Truth of His Word which his enemies have destroyed. His care for the faithful is ever before Him, and, although the Church has rejected His Divine principles, yet these will remain with all who approach the Lord from every religion ; and what pertains to heaven will abide with them and they will always worship Him.

(4) *Modern Biblical Research and the Authorship of Isaiah*¹

It has been suggested that textual criticism supports the view that the Book named Isaiah is the work of two, or perhaps three writers who lived at widely separated periods in Jewish history. It is generally agreed that the first portion of the Book, Ch. i.-xxxix., is the prophecy of the Isaiah whose name has been applied to that larger collection which a compiler has brought together to include prophecies by one or more later writers of the exilic and even post-exilic periods. However, portions of the earlier prophecies included in Ch. i.-xxxix. are also generally presumed to be the work of the later writers, as :

1. Ch. xiii.-xiv., 23. On Babylon. The suggestion is that this prophecy was written about 549 B.C., when Cyrus overthrew the Medes and then captured Babylon in 538 B.C.
2. Ch. xxi., 1-10. On Babylon. This is referred by some to a capture of Babylon by Assyrians in the time of Isaiah ; but it would have no direct bearing on the Jewish people. By others it is referred to the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, and so would be the work of a prophet living at the close of the exile, as Ch. xiii.

¹ For a discussion of this subject see Driver and Gray, where further references will be found.

3. Ch. xxiv.-xxvii. It is presumed that this may be referred to the early post-exilic period.
4. Ch. xxxiv.-xxxv. This is referred to the period of the exile.
5. Ch. xxxvi.-xxxix. It is suggested that this might be the work of a later writer than the personal Isaiah.

As examples of the reasons adduced by modern critics for a second and even a third writer of the Book the following may be considered from Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, on Ch. xiii.-xiv. 23, pp. 201-202. He notes that the Jews are represented as *in exile*, and about to be delivered. He continues : "that it was the office of the Prophet to address himself to the needs of his own age, to announce to his contemporaries the judgments or consolations which arose out of the circumstances of his own time, and to interpret for them their own history. To base a promise upon a condition of things *not yet existent*, and without any point of contact with the circumstances or situation of those to whom it is addressed, is alien to the genius of prophecy. Upon grounds of analogy this prophecy Ch. xiii.-xiv. 23, can only be attributed to an author living towards the close of the exile, and holding out to his contemporaries the prospect of release from Babylon, as Isaiah held out to his contemporaries the prospect of deliverance from Assyria."

He continues that as this prophecy only names the Medes as being stirred up against Babylon, and contains no allusion to Cyrus, it is probable it was written before 549 B.C., in which year Cyrus overthrew the Medes under Astyages. The Persians, uniting with the Medes against Babylon, captured it in 538 B.C.

Such reasons, inconclusive as they are even from the literal point of view, have little weight when regard is

paid to the spiritual circumstances of the time. For we read in 2 Kings xvii. 6, in the reign of Hoshea, in the time of Isaiah, that the king of Assyria took Israel captive, placing the people in Halah, Habor and the cities of the Medes. From the spiritual point of view this represents the deification of the god of Reason. The age of reason for the Jewish Church had set in, and by the Children of Israel being placed in the cities of the Medes is signified their being governed by false doctrines. The Medes represent false principles that oppose the good and the true. In this prophecy, Ch. xiii. 17, is described the destruction of goodness and truth by the prevalence of false doctrine in the Church, but the same prophecy also promises the end of Babylon, which, from its first mention as Babel and its heaven-defying tower, epitomizes all such destructive influences in the lust for power, temporal and spiritual, over men's bodies and souls.

While historical allusions in the Letter may seem to place the prophecy in a better setting after the exile has taken place, yet the spirit of the prophecy is appropriate to the time of Isaiah. The name "Isaiah" means "The Salvation of the Lord," and is aptly applied to the compiler of the prophecies which bear the name. The whole prophecy implies condemnation not only of the rational domination from falsity in the understanding, which is Assyria, but also of the lust of dominion arising from evil in the will, which is Babylon. Isaiah is the Prophet who most completely and comprehensively arraigns the departure from the good of life and the truth of faith in the Church, and who, with all the confidence of Divine assurance, foretells the coming of Jehovah Himself, the Messiah, to save the faithful in every quarter of the world. Nothing is more obvious than that the state of the nation and the Church at the time of Hoshea was such as to call forth the righteous indignation of the

Prophet and even to merit exile ; but it is Divinely characteristic of the spirit of prophecy to promise at the same time the speedy, that is, the certain destruction of Israel's spiritual enemies whose activities are described under the figure of Israel's national foes, coupled with the proclamation of the survival of the faithful under a new dispensation of Divine principles for the direction of life and faith when the Messiah should come.

The Church as to truth was already at its consummation stage : the historical exile of the Northern Kingdom was the outward sign of the spiritual fact, and the spiritual implication of this prophecy is its own justification for its place in the narrative. For the Church as to good, represented by the Kingdom of Judah, was experiencing a parallel decadence under the corroding influence of the Babylonian spirit ; and this chapter, with others in the earlier portion of the Book, as xxi., xxiv.-xxvii., xxxiv.-xxxv., foretells the triumphant salvation of the faithful and the ultimate destruction of this spiritual evil which, pictured by the nation Babylon, two centuries later became so powerful in outward political history as to bring about the captivity of the Southern Kingdom and the Jewish Church as still existent there.

This strengthens the probability that the later prophecies of this Book, Ch. xl.-lxvi., might also have been written by the same penman. As a Prophet he sees beneath the surface of things into the existing spiritual state of the Church ; and it is quite in keeping with the function of prophecy to foretell in figures appropriate to the genius of those to whom it is addressed the inevitable consequences in the downward progress of Church and nation, namely, the Captivity and the Return of the Faithful to the Church—consequences which were in fact, and always are, realities to those Divinely commissioned to see into and describe the Everlasting Now.

It may appear to many that the later prophecies, Ch. xl.-lxvi., whose historical details seem to be based on the actual exile in Babylon, could not have been written by one who lived two centuries prior to that event. It should be evident, however, that it is not the historicity of the Book that gives it its place in the Word. The question of who compiled the Letter of the Book fades into nothingness when its purpose is considered. If it is maintained that the Isaiah of the earlier prophecies could not have been the writer of the later (and Modern Criticism is by no means unanimous on this), no violence is done to the content of the Book as a whole. The personal Isaiah who wrote the earlier portion merely hands over his mantle to the compiler by whom the Divine Author caused the Book to be completed. The name of the Book, *The Salvation of the Lord*, describes its character. The spirit of the prophecy is homogeneous and undivided. The transcendent grandeur of the Letter of the prophecy remains unimpaired when regarded as the vehicle of a continuous spiritual message. The language of the Letter, universal rather than local in application, "imaginative, enigmatic and even paradoxical," gains new meaning, clarity and beauty from the recognition, however faint, of the indwelling spirit. Although the Jewish Church reached its consummation stage with the exile to Babylon the Divine principles of goodness and truth which that Church had embodied did not perish from it at once. On the one hand, love to the Lord, charity to the neighbour, all the kindly human domestic affections and the neighbourly feelings of right social and political intercourse; and on the other, the truth about the Lord and His Kingdom and a knowledge of His Word and its compelling power, still continued for the five centuries that followed the exile. These principles, however, remained in their purity only with the few who did not acknowledge the god of Reason or the sovereignty

of the lust of dominion. They were "the five cities," "the gleanings grapes as the shaking of an olive," "the remnant," "the faithful." As the words of the Prophets came to be regarded less and less as the promise of the restoration of the earthly kingdom of Israel so the language of "rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire" became more and more the herald of the coming of the spiritual Messianic Kingdom, to describe which no language was too magnificent. The faithful, therefore, who neither perverted the truth nor profaned the good were the few who were to receive the Lord at His coming, and with the well-disposed Gentiles who had lived beyond the light entrusted to the Jewish Church were to form unpretentiously the nucleus of the succeeding Church, which kindled by the flames of Pentecost has spread an irresistible fire over the length and breadth of the world.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PROPHETS. II.

1. JEREMIAH. 626-586 B.C.

- (1) The Nature of the Book.
- (2) The Decadent State of the Church, and Promise of Salvation for the Faithful. Ch. I.-XLV.
- (3) Prophecies against the Nations, and Establishment of a New Church. Ch. XLVI.-LII.

2. LAMENTATIONS. 588 B.C.

3. EZEKIEL. 592-570 B.C.

- (1) The Nature of the Book.
- (2) Some Features of the Prophecies.

I. JEREMIAH. 626-586 B.C.

JEREMIAH belonged to a sacerdotal family who lived at Anathoth, a village of Benjamin, a little to the North of Jerusalem. He began his public career in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, king of Judah. His ministry lasted for forty years and by tradition ended significantly in Egypt. Here it is supposed he was put to death by some of his own countrymen who had forcibly carried him from Judah after the murder of Gedaliah, the governor of Judah set up by Nebuchadnezzar in place of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah.

(1) *The Nature of the Book*

The Book which bears his name is apparently a series of prophecies by him and narratives concerning him. In the Letter these follow no chronological order, and efforts to re-arrange them to conform to any definite historical sequence are based upon evidence and argument¹ which are quite inconclusive. The prophetic matter which is here set forth, in the form of narrative,

¹ See Driver and Gray for the nature of this, and for further references.

parable, symbolical act and prophecy is all correspondent: its value is not to be limited by arbitrary reference to real or supposed historical events, or to what commentators imagine to have been the personal reaction of the Prophet to certain circumstances. The Prophet is primarily a particular facet of Divine Truth presenting itself in outward word and deed to serve the spiritual needs not only of his own but of all time. The Book, whether it was composed or compiled by one hand or more is none the less a continuous spiritual unity, with a quality of its own under the distinctive name of the Prophet, representing the Lord as to Divine Truth combating against the powers of evil. His treatment at the hands of the Jews who remained in Jerusalem when the others went into exile to Babylon represents the spiritual indignities inflicted on the Word by a recreant Church, and his cries of agony and despair are the voice of Divine Love seeking to soften hearts that were hardened in evil. The tradition that he was stoned to death in Egypt is in keeping with the representation that the Jewish Church, though in possession of the knowledge of the truth, which is Egypt, yet perverted and profaned it till it became extinct as an influence for good.

(2) *The Decadent State of the Church, and Promise of Salvation for the Faithful.* Ch. i.-xlv.

In the Letter the first portion of the Book, Ch. i.-xlv., consists chiefly of prophecies relating to Judah and the Kingdom of God, and narratives respecting the personal history of the Prophet and events that happened during his ministry. The second portion, Ch. xlvi.-li., is a series of discourses against foreign nations, with Ch. lii., which is generally regarded as having been excerpted from the Second Book of Kings xxiv. 18 to xxv. 30, by the final compiler of the Prophecy.

The Greek text of the Septuagint shows much

variation from the Hebrew, but most scholars agree that the Massoretic text is superior to the Greek version.

Ch. i.-xiii. The Book begins with a description of the perverted state of the Church, and under the figure of the call of Jeremiah and his mission is prophesied the coming of the Lord to restore what the Church has destroyed. The decadence of the Church from earliest times is traced till it has lost almost all its Divine principles and is now suffering the consequences. External worship is of no avail while the Church profanes the holy things of religion. There is nothing but condemnation for those who seem to flourish in their wickedness. While they destroy in themselves all that is good and true the Lord yet maintains these principles in all their power, and He will come with the new Church for those who will acknowledge Him: but not till all hope and means of salvation have been utterly destroyed in the Jewish Church. The certainty of its end as to any truth in its doctrine and consequent good in its life is represented by the story of the linen girdle.

Ch. xiv.-xix. By dearth in Judah is described the lack of truth in the Church. Its worship is, therefore, unavailing, and by poignant pictures of simple domestic life it is shown that what is neither good nor true has no union with the Lord; and it is promised that others will be brought into the Church which will worship the Lord. Encouragement with hope is held out to those within the Jewish Church who will recognize the Divine by observing the Sabbath. As though to point this lesson the Prophet draws upon the analogy of the potter's work. Even those who in spite of their knowledge are in falsity and evil can be reformed by the Lord on repentance; and by the breaking of the potter's earthen bottle the Prophet represents the destruction of the Church beyond restoration if it finally forsakes the Lord and chooses a life of evil.

Ch. xx.-xxi. The treatment of Jeremiah by the priesthood represents the blaspheming of the Word by the Church, and as an inevitable consequence he prophesies the captivity in Babylon. The Prophet, however, proclaims confidence in the power of the Lord to protect His Word, and gives vent to grief that the Church should so treat it. Especially vile is the conduct of those who profane the Word while actually professing to observe it. Herein lies the explanation of Jeremiah's advice to his countrymen, when he prophesies life and safety to those who go over to Babylon. By those who go over, who choose *the way of life*, are represented those in whom all knowledge of the principles of the Church have been lost, but in whom there still remains the elementary principle of natural charity. These can become members of the new Church to be established when the old has been completely destroyed. Those who choose *the way of death*, who remain in Jerusalem and maintain the show of worship in the Temple, are those who, having the Word, have profaned its teaching and corrupted its good and whose life is principled in evil.

Ch. xxiv. This teaching is again repeated in the simple picturesque setting of the story of the two baskets of figs. Those who can be reformed are those in whom all knowledge of truth and good has been lost, represented by their exile to Babylon, so that they are in complete ignorance of what is good and true. If, however, they are in simple natural good, and respond to the teaching of Divine Truth when it is presented to them, and acknowledge the Lord, then, as the faithful remnant, they can be received into the new Church. Those who cannot be reformed, having perverted the truth they have learned, will perish, after profaning every holy thing in the Church whose worship they still make a show of observing.

Ch. xxii.-xxiii. Under the figure of the three kings, Shallum, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin are described the various phases of perversion of the truth, while by the wicked pastors are pictured those who destroy the Church by profaning the good ; and the salvation of the faithful remnant at the coming of the Lord is contrasted with the fate of the false prophets.

Ch. xxv.-xxvi. The prophecy now declares that the wickedness of the Church and its profanation of Divine worship, warring against the teaching of the Word—this being the temptation through which the Church was passing—would culminate in the complete extinction of goodness and truth, represented by the seventy years' captivity in Babylon. By the fate of the false prophet is shown how futile is the attempt of falsity to prevail against Divine Truth.

Ch. xxvii.-xxxiii. These chapters are an elaboration of the prophecy as given in Ch. xxi.-xxiv., where the hopeful state of those who submitted to the yoke of Babylon is set in striking contrast to the fate of those who would not submit. These latter, Jews and neighbouring nations alike, represent those in the knowledge of truth but in a life of evil. Those, however, who are in the spiritual captivity of ignorance in Babylon, under the figure of living a peaceful domestic life, are encouraged to learn the principles of the religious life. When their temptation is ended it is promised that they will enter into the Lord's new Church, the glorious nature of which is described, and the lasting nature of which is represented by the Prophet's purchase of the field.

Ch. xxxiv.-xxxvi. The Prophet now contrasts the faithlessness of the Jewish Church, who chose slavery to falsity in preference to freedom, with the steadfast character of the Rechabites. They, the sons of Jonadab, represent the Celestial Church, or that phase of the Church

in which good predominates, neither drinking wine, nor building houses, nor sowing seed, nor planting vineyards, for by these activities are signified learning truths and storing them in the memory. They make obedience to the truth, not its acquisition, their rule of life, as goodness or love is their ruling principle. Nothing can divert them from their righteous way. The Jewish Church, however, although it has been taught the truth continually, has refused to obey its commands and will bring about its own destruction. To represent the imperishable nature of Divine Truth the Prophet narrates the striking incident of the burning of his prophecies by Jehoiakim.

Ch. xxxvii.-xxxix. The tendency of the Church to rely upon knowledge merely—denoted by Egypt—and that perverted by false reasoning is again denounced by the Prophet. He also repeats again the prophecy of Ch. xxi., xxiv., xxvii., that the Jews who should submit to Babylon represent those whose redemption is possible; but that those who remained in Jerusalem cannot be saved, as they are perverting the truth and profaning the good of life by a spurious worship. Nevertheless the assurance is given that a simple understanding of the Word and kindly charity would continue for a time.

Ch. xl.-xlv. The persistence of this simple understanding of the Word is signified by the Prophet being allowed to choose his residence in Jerusalem, and the possibility of salvation is held out if only the Church would remain in the simplicity of external worship. However, by deciding to go to Egypt it was represented that they preferred to pervert for their own evil ends their knowledge of the truth, in spite of the warning of Jeremiah that all who choose Egypt would perish, except the remnant who could be saved. This section ends with the oft-repeated prophecy that destruction awaits the Jewish Church.

(3) *Prophecies against the Nations, and Establishment of a New Church.* Ch. xlvi.-lii.

Ch. xlvi.-li. Now follows, under the figure of the destruction of the nations that had contact with Judah, the tale of the disintegration of the Church and the manner in which the various Divine principles are falsified. Yet the ultimate fate of these destructive forces is also prophesied, with the promise of salvation for those who in simple faith have not participated in the perverse and profaning activities of the Church. This is described in language rising above historical narrative to heights of poetic grandeur, in an order appropriate to the prophetic purpose of Jeremiah.¹

Ch. xlvi. The prophecy proceeds against Egypt, that is, the natural scientific or external knowledge of the Word, declaring that the natural principle will perish by reasoning from knowledge which has been falsified; but it is provided that those who maintain their knowledge in purity will be of the new Church.

Ch. xlvii. Against the Philistines, those who are in faith alone.

Ch. xlviii. Against Moab, those who profane what is good and true in the Church and in the Word: but those who do not so profane will be saved.

Ch. xlix. Against Ammon, those who falsify the truths of the Church and the Word; against Edom, those who falsify the external or literal sense of the Word; against Damascus, those who pervert their knowledge of the truth; against Arabia and Hazor, those who respectively pervert the knowledge of good and truth; against Elam, those who falsify doctrine and who, being in the knowledge of faith, are not in charity.

¹ See p. 154, for order of nations in the prophecy of Isaiah.

Ch. 1.-li. And finally against Babylon, those who by tradition and false reasoning have profaned all that is good and true. When the Jewish Church has completely destroyed the Divine principles entrusted to it, and sought dominion over all, it will itself be destroyed and will be succeeded by the new Church to be established by the Lord.

Ch. lii. The prophecy naturally concludes with a description of the last state of the Jewish Church when, under the overwhelming weight of tradition, falsity and evil lust of dominion, all the Divine principles have perished from its keeping. But, true to the spirit of prophecy, as the Word of God speaking to man, it also describes the establishment of the new Church to be founded in its place. In those who are to be its members simple charity will take the place of the love of dominion and faith from charity will be the ruling principle in the life.¹

2. LAMENTATIONS. 588 B.C.

This Book is ascribed to Jeremiah by tradition supported by the Septuagint, the Targum and the Talmud. The Old Testament, however, contains no statement as to the writer of the Book, and the researches of Biblical scholars do not remove the uncertainty which surrounds the literal authorship. The Book is remarkable for the highly developed nature of its literary structure. It consists of five poems which follow well-defined lines of composition, the whole presenting a comprehensive picture of personal and national woe. The number of verses in the chapters corresponds to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, twenty-two, but in chapter three there are three verses to each letter and the alphabetic order is maintained except in the last chapter.

¹ See MacLagan, *The Two Books of Kings Explained*, p. 700.

The historical setting is generally assigned to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, c. 588 B.C., and three of the five chapters, one, two and four, appear to be dirges or lamentations over the fall of the city. The third chapter may be described in the Letter as a figurative account of the sufferings through which the prophet passed along with his countrymen in consequence of the anger of the Lord at their sins ; and chapter five is a confession of the nation's wrong and an appeal for compassion to God Who has apparently forsaken them.

In the spiritual sense, however, the personality of the writer becomes of no concern as the subject is the decadence of the Church. In chapters one and two is described how all the Divine principles have been perverted, yet it can grieve over their loss. In chapter three is described how the Lord opposes the forces of evil and falsity but pardons the penitent. In chapters four and five is further described in poetically varied figures how the Church's conduct must result in its own ruin, and the Book closes with a prayer for the restoration of the Church, to signify that communion with God is an eternal fact, however much the Church may seem to thwart it.

3. EZEKIEL. 592-570 B.C.

Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was a priest and belonged to the aristocracy of Jerusalem. He was one of those carried captive to Babylonia with King Jehoiachin in 597 B.C., and his party was settled at Tel-Abib on the banks of the Chebar, a river-canal some 400 miles north of Babylon. He received his prophetic call in the fifth year of the Captivity, 592 B.C., and his last dated prophecy is Ch. xxix., twenty-two years later.

(I) The Nature of the Book

Like his contemporary Jeremiah he prophesied both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem, but little is known of his life. There is an uncertain tradition that he died a martyr's death at the hands of his countrymen who were enraged at the tone of his prophecies. According to Hebrew authorities the actual writer of the Book is unknown, but modern critics are agreed that no other Book of the Old Testament can be assigned to an individual writer with greater confidence. Most of the prophecies are written in the first person and many of them are dated. In the Letter they are classified into three groups according to their general subject. The first group consists of Ch. i.-xxiv., dealing with the impending fall of Jerusalem. The second group, Ch. xxv.-xxxii., includes prophecies against foreign nations, and the third group, Ch. xxxiii.-xlvi., deals with the subject of Israel's restoration which means the establishment of a new Church.

Whoever was the penman, and this is a historical detail immaterial to the meaning and purpose of the Book, Ezekiel is a series of prophecies couched in a literary form which yields to textual research but little of its inner content. Vision, parable, symbolical act and allegory are all employed with consummate art not so much to illustrate and point the moral of the life of transient nations as to embody in correspondentia language for all time the inner voice of spiritual instruction that every man may hear.

Ezekiel is the Prophet who more than any other is outstanding in his pointed, picturesque yet at times prosaic delineation of the higher spiritual realities. He is the Prophet of the Lord's Glorification, and for this reason the Letter of his prophecy is the record of the Lord's warfare as Divine Truth against the evil and

falsity which oppose His Love and Wisdom, not only, as happened, in the historical Jewish Church, the consummation stage of which Ezekiel was portraying, but also in the universal Church as it exists in the individual at a similar stage of spiritual development.

(2) *Some Features of the Prophecies*

Ch. i. As a fitting introduction to its high spiritual purpose the Book begins with a description of the Word, or the Lord as to Divine Truth, down to the very externals of which in the Letter as a cloud through its celestial and spiritual content the Divine itself extends. This the Prophet saw in his first vision.

Ch. ii.-iii. The Jewish Church, however, had rejected the Word, although "it was as honey for sweetness," and it continued to reject its teaching in spite of repeated warnings and entreaties spoken through the Prophet Ch. iv.-v. By symbolical acts are described how evil and falsity have attacked the Church, and how the Church has adulterated and profaned the goodness and truth of the Word, even in its Letter, as represented by the Prophet's hair.

Ch. viii. The heinous sin of profanation, whereby the interior evil lust and passion are made to express themselves in actions that appear to conform to outward standards of law and rectitude, is frequently made the subject of Ezekiel's denunciation. Thus he prophesies against the profanation of what is holy under the figure of corrupt worship, when each man "in the chambers of his imagery" worships in the interiors of his soul the false idols of his own self-love.

Ch. xii. By the symbolical act of his removal from his house is represented the departure of the Divine principles from the Jewish Church and the warning is given that those who no longer live according to these principles will perish in their sins.

Ch. xiv. No intercession will save them. Noah, Daniel and Job are mentioned, for they represent those who are reformed by truths from the Word, and by conquering in temptation. Their salvation by reformation they won for themselves : it cannot be transferred to those who persist in the evil of their lives.

Ch. xvi. In a comprehensive summary the Prophet now describes the rise and fall of the Church with the Jewish and Israelitish peoples : how it began with the people in evil and falsity : how they were instructed in the things of the religious life by the Lord : how they might have reached and maintained indefinitely a high level of spirituality and how they perverted the Divine principles and even profaned them. After lamenting the deeper degradation reached by the Church of Jerusalem as compared with the Church of Samaria, this prophecy closes with the promise so oft repeated when the end of the Church is declared as imminent that a new Church will be set up with others.

Ch. xvii.-xix. How the Jewish Church fell from the intellectual position it did attain, and perverted and rejected the truth which her mother — the Ancient Church — had possessed, is now followed by a prophecy.

Ch. xx. In this is again pictured, under the figure of the national history of the people, the career of the Jewish Church from its beginning till it should be superseded by another. From the earliest times as natural men they were instructed in the knowledge of religious things ; and after being led from Egypt, which country is representative of this instruction, into Canaan, which was and might have continued to be the full life and worship of the Church, they sank into idolatry, and profaned the only things in which they had been instructed.

Ch. xxi. Thus they destroyed the Church by their own love of evil and falsity.

Ch. xxiii.-xxiv. Again is described the decadence of the Church in its two phases, the one in truth, represented by Samaria, and the other in good, represented by Jerusalem. The corruption of Samaria is brought about through the perversion of truth by false reasoning, and the corruption of Jerusalem not only by the falsification of truth but also by the profanation of good. This spiritual profanation is pictured by the pot on the consuming fire ; and the calamitous severance of communion with the Lord, Who is Love itself, by the callous Church unrepentant in its evil life, and therefore undeserving of compassion, is represented by the death of the Prophet's wife. In prosaic narrative that far transcends in emotional effect the art of rhetoric is described the Prophet's hopeless, passionless grief for the loss of "the desire of his eyes." Thus is pictured the boundless love of the Divine Husband of the Church, a Love that is never diminished far less withholden, but which follows to the last extremity, when He comes to save that for which salvation is possible.

Ch. xxv.-xxxii. This is a group of prophecies directed against those who pervert the spiritual things of the Church by the misuse of intellectual principles, principles which are only pernicious when diverted to evil ends. These prophecies are a reiteration of the warnings by Isaiah and Jeremiah to the Church, but expressed in their own sequence here in a form appropriate to the spirit of Ezekiel. The ultimate destruction of those affected by the admonitions is foretold when their triumph seems complete ; for then they will have accomplished the last stage in the life of the decadent Church, and blotted out the last vestige of the Divine. When that happens the promise remains that the Lord will come to inaugurate a new Church for the salvation of men.

Ch. xxxiii.-xxxvi. The responsibility of the Church for rejecting the teaching of the Word is emphasized by the Prophet. The mere fact that the Church has the Word is of no avail as long as its teaching is ignored and profaned, and the Prophet supplies the reason why the decadent Church is tolerated so long. It is because the Word is there preserved in its integrity as it could not be elsewhere : thus it is assured that a knowledge of the Lord will be maintained among men. As the Jewish Church, however, by the falsification of faith will destroy for itself the influence of the Word, it will give place to the new Church whose coming is so surely predicted.

Ch. xxxvii. The rise and development of the new Church is graphically depicted in the wonderful vision of dry bones ; and it is further prophesied that it will unite in perfect harmony the Divine principles of goodness and truth, represented by the union of the two sticks, that of Joseph representing truth and that of Judah representing good.

Thus is summed up the essence of true religion—a life of good, motivated by love to the Lord and charity to the neighbour, and lived in accordance with a faith based upon the Divine Truth of the Word.

Ch. xxxviii.-xxxix. The power the Church has attained by reliance upon the external of the Word and a corresponding external worship is represented by the might of Gog. It is prophesied, however, that such a religion can only end in destruction, as falsity, untrammelled by any interior principle of good, must gain the ascendancy. The fate of the Jewish Church is not to be averted by such a show of religion, though it may be delayed. The succeeding Church, which the Prophet now describes, will not be the existing Jewish Church restored.

Ch. xl. That Church is the city that was smitten—but a new Church, as has so often been prophesied, a

spiritual Israel, composed of those who in ignorance and not in profanation of Divine principles endured the spiritual captivity, along with those who, living in simple good, will be gathered in by the Lord from every nation.

Ezekiel in symbolical act and with familiar symbols has written the Word of the Lord as a fellow-countryman of the Jews. He has written as a Prophet by vision as well as by direct testimony to teach, to castigate and to remonstrate with a perverse and self-willed people rushing headlong to its own destruction. Now as a priest, who knew intimately Jerusalem and the Temple, by multitudinous detail and meticulous measurement he pictures the new Church in all the glory of its doctrine, its worship, its universality and its acknowledgment of the Lord. His is no picture of any ideal earthly paradise, fashioned from his own constructive imagination. It is a representation in correspondential language, every item of which has its own spiritual significance, of the spiritual Church which is not subject to earthly limitations or measurements. This Church is regarded first as to its doctrine, from the celestial, spiritual and external points of view as the Prophet's outlook was towards the East, the South and the North.

Ch. xli. Next are described in detail all that pertains to interior worship—the celestial phase of the Church's life, Ch. xlii., and then all that pertains to external worship in the Church.

Ch. xlivi. Looking towards the East the Prophet now becomes aware of the glory of the Lord, hears His voice and again beholds the vision that first appeared to him at Chebar. This represents the presence in the Church of the Word in its Letter, and the prophecy declares it will no more be defiled, but that worship will be in accordance with its teaching.

Ch. xlvi.-xlviii. The prophecy now proclaims that all the good of worship comes from the Lord, and

that the Jewish Church, having destroyed the Divine principles entrusted to it, will have no part in the new Church in which both doctrine and worship will be holy, being infilled with Divine influx from the Lord. The generous, unstinted, ceaseless nature of the inflow of Divine Truth to inspire the new Church for its continued intellectual development and advance in the good of life is depicted in the Prophet's vision of the waters flowing from the Temple. The comprehensive universality of the Church is represented by its assignment to the twelve tribes of Israel, and its Divine cosmopolitanism is pictured in the twelve gates by which it may be entered. The prophecy concludes with the significant declaration that the Church will be the Lord's, Who in His Divine Humanity as the centre of all worship is Himself the Temple, of which the earthly Tabernacle and Temple were but types and shadows.¹

¹ For homiletical expositions see "The Resurrection of Dry Bones," and "The Vision of the Holy Waters," in the *Divine Word Opened*, by Dr. Bayley.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PROPHETS. III.

1. DANIEL. Traditional view, 605 B.C.
Modern view, 165 B.C.
 - (1) The Writer, Date, and Meaning of the Book.
 - (2) The Decline of the Church as to Good. Ch. I.-VI.
 - (3) The Decline of the Church as to Truth. Ch. VII.-XII.
2. THE ORDER OF THE PROPHETS. (Table.)
3. THE MINOR PROPHETS. 810-420 B.C.

1. DANIEL. Traditional view, 605 B.C.
Modern view, 165 B.C.

(1) The Writer, Date and Meaning of the Book

ACCORDING to the Book itself the Prophet was one of the captives taken to Babylon when Jerusalem fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, c. 605 B.C. The twelve chapters of the Book appear to fall naturally into two groups, in each of which in the Letter a distinctive idea seems to stand out. The first six chapters are narrative. They relate incidents in the life of Daniel and his companion captives, which describe God's regard for those who remain faithful to Him under religious persecution. The remaining six chapters are visions attributed to the Prophet apparently recording in cryptic form God's purpose throughout the ages to overcome the nations that oppose Him and to establish under the rule of the Jewish nation His universal Kingdom on the earth.

The traditional view that the Book was written in the sixth century by the Prophet whose name it bears has been questioned by modern critics on various grounds. It has been pointed out that Daniel formed no part of the Hebrew Prophetic Canon but was included later in the

Holy Writings, Kethubim.¹ This, of course, is no argument against the older date of the composition of Daniel, but only for its later recognition as canonical. It is also urged that if this Book had been in existence in his day Ben-Sirach, c. 180 B.C., would have included Daniel in the list of famous men of Israel referred to in Ecclesiasticus xliv.

A more cogent argument is that based on language. The Book is written mainly in Hebrew, with a part, Ch. li., v. 4-vii., in a form of Aramaic. This Aramaic is akin to that used in the first century A.D. and differs decisively from that written in the sixth century B.C. Moreover, the presence of Greek words in the Book for musical instruments would suggest that it was written after the spread of Greek culture eastward which followed the conquests of Alexander the Great, 336-323 B.C.

Again, it is claimed that a scholar and courtier as Daniel presumably was would not make the errors that are evident in the historical setting. For instance, he gives the name of the king whom he served as Nebuchadnezzar, whereas Jeremiah and Ezekiel, contemporaries but not attached to the Court, spell it correctly, Nebuchadrezzar. He also calls Belshazzar the son of Nebuchadnezzar : he was, however, the son of Nabonidus ; and he describes Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon, being succeeded by Darius the Mede, whereas the last king of Babylon was Nabonidus, who was succeeded by Cyrus the Persian.

To these textual and historical arguments for the later date are to be added those which are suggested by the predictions of the Prophetic visions. If the compiler of the Book is regarded as one of the Apocalyptic writers² of the sub-Christian era, employing the language highly charged with symbolic imagery common to the times, and looking backward to a name outstanding for adher-

¹ See Ch. v., p. 39.

² See *Religious Thought in Palestine in the Time of Christ*, T.H. Bindley.

ence to religious convictions in the tradition of the nation and forward to the destruction of the nation's most hated enemy, his position may be placed with some appearance of certainty towards the end of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, 175-164 B.C. For the Prophet predicts with apparent accuracy the death of that sacrilegious monarch.

All the arguments which seek to decide not merely the historical character and personality of the Prophet and the historical accuracy of the text, but also the date when the Prophecy was written, only lead one to wander amid the most perilous paths of Biblical criticism. The most significant feature of modern criticism is the conclusion that the obvious purpose of the Book is not to record historical fact. Its value from this point of view is admittedly negligible. It is widely recognized that its purpose is to portray the working out in national history of the Divine plan for the spiritual development of man, individually and nationally. It therefore lies deeper than the lessons of history which man may learn for himself : deeper also than allegory which man may fashion for himself. What is of importance to the student of the Book is the general agreement that any teaching of the Book based upon its literal interpretation is inadequate as an expression of any Divine purpose. Therefore, when it is realized that the interpretation must be spiritual, it is a matter of little moment whether the traditional or the modern view as to the historicity and the date of the compilation of the Book is accepted. The interpretation lies within the Letter as we have it in the Canon : it is not affected by the theories that may be held as to when or even by whom the Letter was finally written and included in the Canon. Daniel, whose name means " Judgment," and who gives his name to the Book, is representative of the Lord in His Word, particularly that prophetic teaching concerning the Coming of

the Lord, and also concerning the states through which the decadent Church would decline and the judgment that would follow its consummation.

(2) *The Decline of the Church as to Good.* Ch. i.-vi.

The Story¹ opens in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against Jerusalem and effected the captivity of Judah. This historical period represents the spiritual state into which the Church had fallen. Under Jehoiakim the sacred things of the Church were profaned as they had never been before, and the third year represents the full and complete degradation to which the Church had sunk. When the Church reached this stage the Babylonian spirit asserted its supremacy and led Judah captive.

The first section of the Book, Ch. i.-vi., is narrative in form and, of course, representative in character. In it is described the development of the spirit of Babylon, namely, the perversion of truth and the profanation of good, leading not only to the destruction of the Jewish Church with the Jewish nation but also to the consummation of the new Church, the Christian Church, to be formed by the Lord when the Jewish Church should reach its end.² In this section is described the spiritual decline of the Church as to good, the principle of love, or its opposite, lust, being the feature emphasized in the representative story.

Ch. i. When the Church, originally in the love and worship of the Lord, has become possessed of the Babylonian spirit, it shows great solicitude to gain a knowledge and an understanding of the principles of the Church.

¹ For spiritual sense of the Book see *Exposition of Daniel*, by M. Sibley.

² In his *Summary Exposition of the Prophets and Psalms* Swedenborg briefly traces on parallel lines the progress of the two Churches, the Jewish and the Christian, to their consummation.

Ch. ii. In the absence, however, of spiritual insight, the decadence of the Church is certain ; and its downward progress is dramatically pictured and its end prophetically portrayed in the image seen in his dream by Nebuchadnezzar, who represents the Babylonian spirit, and what happened to it. At first the Church was in the love of the Lord : this is represented by the head being of gold. Then on the waning of love as its ruling principle it placed its reliance on truth, on doctrine and on faith : its breast and arms were of silver. When this failed as a predominant standard of church life the principle of natural good, or charity towards the neighbour maintained the Church as a living force among men : the belly and thighs were of brass. This gave place to truth in its lowest outer form, the hard, cold doctrine of the Letter of the Law, but mingled with a shallow, insincere regard for others, which constituted a most unsubstantial foundation for any form of religious life. This last and lowest phase of the Church is represented by the feet of the image being of iron and clay.

The destruction of the image by the stone from the mountain represents the supersession of the Jewish Church by the establishment of a new Church at the Coming of the Lord as Divine Truth ; and this comes from the mountain for the Lord only destroys from love, in order that He may replace that which has become debased with that which is holy.

Ch. iii. In spite of the warnings conveyed by the Prophetic Word the Church exalts perverted love, the love of self, as its god ; but influenced by principles of truth which refuse to be silenced the profession of the worship of the Lord continues for a season.

Ch. iv. When self-love is the ruling love in the Church, dominion over Church and state, ecclesiastical and temporal power, is its ambition. A knowledge of the Word, however, still remaining in the Church though

perversion contributes to an outward acknowledgment of the Lord and His Divine power.

Ch. v. Again the warning is given that the Church proceeding to the profanation of the good and the true entrusted to it would consequently be deprived of every Divine principle.

Ch. vi. Nevertheless, those in whom the truth remained as a dominant factor in their spiritual life would refuse to take part in the self-worship demanded by the Church and would still maintain the worship of the Lord.

(3) *The Decline of the Church as to Truth.* Ch. vii.-xii.

In the second section, Chapters vii.-xii., the main theme is the decline of the Church as to truth.

Ch. vii. It is Daniel, the Prophetic spirit of the Word, who is represented as seeing the vision which comprehensively symbolizes the career of the Church proceeding step by step in its perversion of the truth. The end of the Church is marked by the Coming of the Ancient of Days, Who is the Lord from eternity, and the establishment of His new Church.¹

Ch. viii. Then follows a description of the rising power of falsity in the various stages through which the Church passes. This increases till doctrine is set before life, and faith alone, with all the power of self-intelligence, represented by the he-goat with the notable horn, destroys the power both of charity and of faith, the ram with the two horns. This is the final stage in the life of the Church when the spirit of faith alone defies even Divine Truth itself, the Prince of princes; but there is added the prophecy that faith alone shall be broken.

Ch. ix. The beautiful prayer of confession for a Church that has compassed its own destruction leads to

¹ See *The Divine Word Opened*, Bayley, for exposition of this chapter with the Vision of the Four Beasts.

the assurance that the Prophetic Word, although it has suffered rejection, has as its foundation the Divinity of the Lord, for Gabriel instructing Daniel represents this spiritual fact. This chapter concludes with the teaching so often repeated that when a dispensation has served its purpose the Divine principles, themselves unimpaired, which it no longer respects are entrusted to another. This teaching is presented by the use of numbers which have no arithmetical meaning and by times which have no temporal significance.¹ All the terms employed here, as everywhere in the Word, have only a spiritual application.²

The reference to the Messiah being cut off (v. 26) is a prophecy that falsity will bring about the destruction of the Christian Church which was to succeed the Jewish.

Ch. x. This great vision of Daniel presents a description of the Lord as to Divine Truth. In the light of that truth is prophetically depicted the Church infested with the principle of faith alone, but upheld by the power of truth from the Word, represented by Michael.

Ch. xi. In this chapter is pictured the spiritual state of the religious world after the Jewish Church has been destroyed. Under the figure of quasi-historical and quasi-geographical references (which convey no literal significance in spite of the efforts of scholars to establish historical coincidences), the development of spiritual principles in the succeeding Church is traced.³ The king of the South represents the truths of faith from a spirit of charity, while the king of the North represents the principle of faith separated from charity. As has been related before under many varied forms, the Church

¹ See Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 465, on the futility of attempting a literal explanation.

² See note Ch. xii., on Dates, Numbers, Time and Space, p. 116.

³ See *Peculiarities of the Bible*, Rendell, p. 444, for discussion of the historical fulfilment of prophecy.

ruled by the principle of faith alone, represented by the king of the North, prevails over all opposition, save only that of the few who hold fast to the Word, till it, in its turn, is finally overthrown.

Ch. xii. When this happens it is prophesied that there will be a time of great spiritual tribulation which, however, will herald the establishment of the New Christian Church.

2. ORDER OF THE PROPHETS

The Prophets are classified according as the main reference of their teaching is to Goodness or to Truth.

		JUDAH. Province of the Will.	ISRAEL. Province of the Understanding.
Traditional. c. B.C.	Modern. c. B.C.	The Church as to Good.	The Church as to Truth.
810-698 810-725	549	ISAIAH	Hosea
810-660 or later	Post-captivity	Joel	
810-785	760-745		Amos : the earliest piece of Jewish literature
588-583	Fifth century		Obadiah
856-784	Written in fifth to third century		Jonah
758-699		Micah	Micah
720-698	666-607		Nahum
612-598		Habakkuk	
640-609	Ch. III., Post-exilic	Zephaniah	
628-586 585-536 606-534	165	JEREMIAH EZEKIEL DANIEL	
520-518		Haggai	
520-518	Ch. I.-VIII., sixth century Ch. IX.-XI., part pre-exilic Ch. XII.-XIV., part third to second century	Zechariah	
436-420		Malachi	

3. THE MINOR PROPHETS.¹ 810-420 B.C.

The twelve Prophets whose records are grouped in the Jewish Canon as one Book are called Minor not because they were regarded as unimportant but because of the brevity of their writings. These cover roughly four centuries, a period including the Greater Prophets with whom they are intimately linked up in function.

Their number is significant, for by "twelve" are represented all the principles that go to compose the spiritual body of the Church. Each of the Prophets, in addition to the general teaching regarding the spiritual life to be derived from all prophetic literature, represents some particular aspect of the truth as it was observed, or perverted, in the doctrine and life of the Church. Thus in the Twelve the Divine Truth is represented in a form appropriate to the knowledge and circumstances of the long period of the Church's decadence, each phase being singled out and emphasized in its own appropriate setting. This is very wide in its scope, as it provides reproof and instruction for every condition through which the Church declines.

As the basis of human life is the interaction of the twin faculties, the will and the understanding, so the religious life is based on the dual activity of love and wisdom. Moreover the quality of the religious life is determined by the predominant influence of one or other of these great principles, which include between them all the intellectual and spiritual principles which regulate the spiritual life. The circumstance that these faculties, the will and the understanding, with their corresponding principles, love or charity and wisdom or faith, may appear to function separately is due to faith having usurped the ruling place of love and having become the ruling principle in the Church. This is represented by

¹ See Introduction to *Joel*, by Hyde.

the separation of the Northern Kingdom of Israel from the Southern Kingdom of Judah.¹ The dominance of the faith principle or of the love principle in the life of the Church is represented in the Letter of the Word according as the reference is to the Kingdom of Israel or to the Kingdom of Judah. Thus the leading quality of the principles represented by the Prophets is determined by the Kingdom, Israel or Judah, to which they belonged.

There is an important significance also in the order in which these Prophets appear in the Canon, that is, as they appear in our Authorized Version. The sequence in the record of the peculiar qualities represented by the Prophets is the sequence which is naturally followed in the spiritual decadence of the principles in the Church, and therefore it is so Divinely ordered in the final composition of the Word. The order of the Books is as much a matter of Divine arrangement with a Divine purpose in view as the substance of the literal record itself is a matter of Divinely inspired selection.

Of the first seven Prophets, Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah and Nahum have reference to the state of the Church due to its spiritual understanding of the Word. Their ministry was in the Kingdom of Israel. Joel on the other hand represents a defection of the will resulting in idolatry, or a profanation of the love and worship of God. He ministered in Judah. Micah occupies a singular place in the series. He ministered both in Israel and in Judah. He represents the effect of the state of the will and of the understanding upon the reception of the Word. This Book contains a summary description of the spiritual life now reached by the Church in general, with a prophecy concerning the destruction of the Church and the coming of a new Church.

The remaining five, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai,

¹ See Ch. xv., p. 141.

Zechariah and Malachi, belonged to Judah, representing like Joel, each in his own peculiar manner, some phase in the Church's life as its love and worship degenerated in spiritual quality.

The four Greater Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel all belonged to the Kingdom of Judah. While they represented the state of the Church with reference to the Lord and His Word, they also in a distinctive manner represent the relation of the Lord through His Word to the Church. Thus, the love of the Lord, working for the salvation of men, is the predominant note that runs through these Prophecies. Isaiah testifies to the Lord's Incarnation and Redemption, Jeremiah to His combats against the forces of evil and falsity, Ezekiel to His Glorification and Daniel to His Coming with a new Church to take the place of the decadent one on its consummation.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PSALMS

THE PSALMS : Pre-exilic——Post-exilic.

THE Book of Psalms, or Praise-Songs, is a collection of 150 hymns and stands at the head of the group of Sacred Writings which forms the last of the three sections of which the Hebrew Bible is composed. The Psalter itself in the Hebrew Bible is divided into five books as follows :

- | | | |
|------|-----|----------|
| I. | Ch. | 1-41. |
| II. | „ | 42-72. |
| III. | „ | 73-89. |
| IV. | „ | 90-106. |
| V. | „ | 107-150. |

This division seems to be made quite naturally, for each book closes with a doxology, the whole of Ch. cl. appearing to serve as a doxology for Book V.

Ch. lxxii., in addition to the doxology marking the end of Book II., has this significant subscription : "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." This at once suggests that divisions of the Word according to distinctive markings in the text and assignations of portions to certain writers must be treated with reserve. They are no more than conventions and aids for purposes of reference, for if titles are to be taken literally then Ch. lxxii. does not end the list of Psalms that David wrote ; his name appears in the title of Psalms that follow Ch. lxxii. It is evident that something more underlies the statement, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." What is inexplicable as a literal statement is capable of a spiritual solution. This becomes clear when it is known that the titles of the Psalms do

not indicate authorship. They form part of the text and enter into the spiritual interpretation. Ps. lxxii. has as title, "For Solomon." This does not mean as is commonly supposed that Solomon was its author,¹ for while the general picture may seem to represent Solomon's empire on earth, in style and manner it belongs to a later date. David and Solomon both represent the Lord in different aspects of His work.² David, the warrior king, represents the Lord fighting against the evils and falsities in the Church on earth, but Solomon, dwelling in peace and magnificence represents the Lord in His Glorification, ruling in His Kingdom in Heaven and on earth. David, the son of Jesse, is the Lord in His Humanity as He lived and wrought His work of salvation in the world. When it is said of David that "his prayers are ended" we are to understand that in the spiritual development which is paralleled in the Lord, in man and in the Church there is represented the conclusion of the lowly states of the Lord's infirm Humanity and the attainment of His Glorification by which He made His Humanity Divine, the state represented by Solomon. The title, "For Solomon," at the head of the Psalm foreshadows the attainment of the spiritual peace and magnificence that follow the Lord's Glorification.

It is only when it is recognized that the supreme concern of the Psalmist is this advancement in the spiritual life that the "imprecatory" Psalms appear in their true light, as Psalm cxxxvii.,

- v. 8. O daughter of Babylon who art to be destroyed,
happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou
hast served us.
- v. 9. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy
little ones against the stones.

¹ See Driver, *Introduction to Old Testament*, p. 358.

² See Ch. xiv.

In the spiritual sense personal references are transcended. The "daughter of Babylon" is the love of dominion, that lust of rule over the bodies and souls of men that governs those who profane the worship of God by claiming for self what rightly belongs to God. The evils they perpetrate in the Church and in the world bring their own spiritual retribution. It is only an appearance of the Letter which makes injured men or even God the avenger of evil: the underlying reality in the spiritual life is the inevitable law that evil brings its own reward. The "little ones" that must be dashed against the stones are the falsities by which evil-doers regulate their lives and justify or condone their inner depravity; and the stones are the principles of truth, in this case truth falsified, which may be used to destroy what is evil and false in the spiritual warfare for righteousness.¹

There is no Book in the Word whose appeal is so universal as that of the Psalms; it is directed to the heart (where real community among men is to be found, if found at all) rather than to the head. The Psalms in the Letter are apparently the outpourings of the feelings and emotions of the Psalmist, and they touch a responsive chord in every heart. They soothe, they comfort, they restore the oppressed, they cheer, they invigorate, they elevate the faint-hearted. More than all they teach the soul to pray, to enter into converse with God, confident that its manifold emotions, aspirations, hopes and fears will find adequate satisfaction and relief. Whether the mood be one of thanksgiving or of supplication, in states of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, the Psalmist offers the fullest and the noblest forms of expression.

Apparently designed in their final form for the worship of the second Temple the Psalms have outlived the formality of their first setting; and as the hymn-book of the Christian Church they enable the sincere worshipper

¹ See *The Psalms*, by Clowes, p. 573.

at all times and in all circumstances to voice in lyrical numbers the devotion of the heart.

The traditional view that David was the writer of the Psalms carried with it the implications that their subjects were the personal history of David and the circumstances of his age. This simple faith did much to maintain an intuitive belief in the unity of the Book as an epitome of Biblical prophecy, inspiration, prayer and praise, centred though it be in a single historical personality.

One of the unfortunate effects of Modern Criticism is to shake this simple faith. Its research seeks to prove on what appears to be conclusive evidence that very few of the Psalms could belong to the time of David, and that the majority range over many centuries from pre-exilic to very late post-exilic times. It also shows that definite authorship, either on internal or on external evidence, can be assigned to none of the Psalms. It suggests, moreover, from internal evidence such as repetitions and variations with verbal differences that the Book is mainly a compilation by one or more editors from earlier Psalters and contemporary Psalm-literature. Modern research has no doctrine to teach in place of the emotional faith it destroys, and has no explanation to offer as to why the Book has been so composed, retaining such repetitions and differences.

When, however, the doctrine of spiritual interpretation is acknowledged disintegration of faith is avoided and the idea of unity is conserved. The Book is seen to centre not on the person of David, but on the Lord whom David represents ; and the seemingly needless repetition of Psalms with slight differences (as for instance, Ps. xiv., where the name of the Deity is Lord, Jehovah, and Ps. liii., where the name is God, Elohim), is explained by the fact that in the spiritual circumstances that are being described, when the reference is to the Divine Love

the name Lord, Jehovah, is used, but when the reference is to the Divine Wisdom the name God, Elohim, is used.¹

Of course no explanation as to how the Bible has been composed is required if the opinion is held that all Biblical like profane literature is a natural growth, embodying the history of peoples as they lived in contact with other peoples, and expressing the loves and hates, joys and sorrows, intellectual and religious triumphs and failures of individuals as well as of nations. If, however, it is recognized that the Word is literature of an exceptional nature, that it is the medium ordained by Providence for conveying to men in a form they may understand (however high or low their standard of comprehension) the Love and Wisdom of the Lord, with all that is implied, then it will be realized that the Word is not the fortuitous record of the development of men's emotional, intellectual, historical and religious experiences. That is the character of profane literature, and fortuitous because of the instability of the human mind of which it is the product.

In the composition of the Word, on the other hand, the manifold experiences which have been recorded of human life and thought in all their phases have been utilized by the Divine Author to set forth His own nature and the methods of His Love. The Word does not emerge as a by-product from profane literature. It is the great event toward which by well-marked stages all literature has been tending ; and the Divine Wisdom has achieved its purpose in the inspired selection which so many unnamed scribes have been moved to compile.²

The Book of Psalms is part of the Word, but a part in which the whole may be comprehended : as such it is a unity. It displays in its own way of sacred song in the best manner of Hebrew poetry the threefold purpose for

¹ See Ch. vi., p. 49, vii., and x.

² See Ch. vii., p. 55.

which the Word was written, to reveal the Lord in His great work of Glorification, to lead man to achieve his own regeneration and to guide the Church to the final glory of her conjunction with the Lord. David the impersonal Psalmist, represents the Lord or Divine Truth reaching down to man in his every state, from deepest humiliation to highest exaltation, in order to compass his salvation. It is the Divine Wisdom which puts the words into the mouth of the Psalmist, words which are re-echoed in the universal heart of man in tune with the Infinite. Therefore not only David and his age but the whole range of the nation's life from Moses to the Maccabees may well become the lyrical basis on which the spiritual pageant of Glorification, regeneration and the Church's conjunction with her Lord is displayed. The actual writers of the Divine record are unknown : the historical references cannot be located. The spiritual content rises above the music of the sweet singer ; and the song of the shepherd, of the musician and of the king becomes the triumph-song of every man in his regeneration. It is appropriate that the Word of the Old Testament concludes with the Psalms, a Book whose spirituality beams through the clouds of the Letter more clearly than anywhere else, the Book which yields its spiritual content more readily than any other to the earnest seeker after Truth.

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. INTRODUCTION : The General Reference of the New Testament.
2. THE FOURFOLD NATURE OF THE GOSPEL.
3. MATTHEW. A.D. 66-70.
 - (1) Contents.
 - (2) The Genealogy. Ch. I.
 - (3) Galilee.
 - (4) The Second Coming, and the New Church. Ch. XXIV.
 - (5) Conclusion.

I. INTRODUCTION : THE GENERAL REFERENCE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

IN considering the significance of the Letter of the Word it must be remembered that it has a triple reference : to the Lord, to man and to the Church. In the Old Testament the fortunes of the Church are the subject most obviously treated. The spiritual development of man is also treated on parallel lines, while deep within the inner content lies the supreme subject, the Lord Himself, working out His plan for the establishment of His Church and Kingdom, and for the regeneration of man that he may become a worthy citizen of that Kingdom.

In the Word of the New Testament the order of interest is changed. While all three subjects are everywhere treated, in the Gospels the predominant feature is the Coming of the Messiah as the Incarnate God Himself. In the story of how He glorified the Humanity He assumed in the world is also written the story of man's redemption and regeneration. Interwoven throughout the narrative but with an entire lack of formality is recorded the inauguration of a Church in whose worship inner reality took the place of the external symbolism of Judaism. This first Christian Church, however, was

not to last : its end was foretold in the Gospel itself ; but in the Apocalypse its end is actually prophetically described, and in correspondential terms the establishment of the New Christian Church is foreshadowed. This is called the New Jerusalem, and was seen by John as a City coming down from God out of Heaven, the Lamb's Wife, destined to be the Crown of all the Churches and the spiritual home of regenerated man to eternity.

2. THE FOURFOLD NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

It is not by chance that the Gospel story assumes the fourfold form in the Letter of the Word : the reason is inherent in the spiritual character of the record.

From the time the first unnamed worker in the Christian cause, Apostle or disciple, began to put on record for his own use and for the benefit of those to whom he ministered the story of our Lord's life and teaching, there arose a considerable body of religious literature which must have been extensively read and heard by eager Christians. The individual narratives which related the Gospel story itself, and recorded the acts and sayings of our Lord, must have been many and varied, as are the histories of all great events of world importance ; for the differences which appear in these histories are the inevitable consequences of the differences which lie deep in the mental characteristics of the writers.¹

The Canon of the New Testament, with its inner core of Books constituting the Word, was formed in the same way as that of the Old Testament, but within a space of

¹ See Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, p. 64, for comparison between the characteristics of the first three Gospels and the Apostles James, Peter and Paul, from the point of view of the Letter.

two centuries compared with the twenty centuries of the older Book. As one writer¹ puts it :

" The Canon of Scripture was formed not suddenly by some startling miracle, not officially by some decision of Council or Synod or Bishop or Prophet or Saint, but slowly, gradually, half unconsciously by the quiet influence of the Holy Spirit on the minds of men in the Church."

Here it is important to notice that the part played by the human element in forming the Canon should not be misunderstood. The minds of men no doubt owed much to a Divine impulse in arriving at a general recognition of certain historical and epistolary writings, comprising the Book of the Acts and the Epistles, as more worthy of the Church's veneration than other contemporary literature. The inclusion of the Gospels and the Revelation of John was due to a more directly inspired selection, as was their final composition. These Books, a minor Canon, as it were, within a major, form the Word of the New Testament which still remains the Word that was from the beginning, expressing the Divine Truth for the Christian Church for all time, notwithstanding the Petrine, Pauline and other doctrinal differences that have arisen. The Word of the New Testament, like the Word of the Old, is Divine because of its spiritual content, which consists everywhere of a continuous spiritual sense, independent of the obvious literal meaning, or merely intellectual content of the Letter. As this spiritual sense is the expression of the Divine and not of human intelligence, having for its subject the eternal things of the spirit and not the ephemeral things of the material world, it can only be arrived at as the Divine reveals it. The only objective means provided for its universal comprehension is a knowledge of the correspondential nature of

¹ F. Paterson Smyth, *Our Bible in the Making*, p. 187.

the language of the Letter of the Word.¹ (It is beyond the scope of this present work to consider subjective revelation, that indefinable, inner, private light which illuminates the soul of mystic and saint, and which is rediffused within a narrow sympathetic sphere more as an emotional than as an intellectual influence.)

The language of correspondences, from the nature of the case, is the same as that of ordinary speech, although it may appear at times overloaded with parable and symbol, and over-embellished with imagery. It is said of Dr. Johnson that he found the English language brick and left it marble. It may be said of the Divine Author of the Word that He touched the natural language of men and made it spiritual. The correspondential style is closely resembled in some of the contemporary literature of both the Old and New Testaments, as in the Book of Job and the various collections of the Sayings of Jesus ; but wherever it is followed or imitated the ideas expressed remain human, limited by the range of the constructive human intellect. This is no disparagement of such writings, just as it is no disparagement to record the fact that the intellectual content of a Pauline Epistle is the measure of a human mind. What the mind of man initiates and conceives remains human and finite : and, although the human mind cannot grasp the infinity of Divine Truth as it exists in the mind of God and is expressed in His Word, yet it can reach out towards it as revelation points the way.

During the second century, the Gospel narratives had all given place to the four as we have them in that particular group of Books regarded as the "inspired Scriptures of God," in which it is significant to note the Revelation of John was also included. Not only were the Gospels confined to the Four, but suggestions were being made as to why they, and they only, should be regarded as Scripture.

¹ See Ch. ix.

In this connection the views of Irenaeus are of some importance. A native of Asia Minor, he sat at the feet of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, c. 167 A.D., who had heard St. John, and was, as it were, a link between the apostolic and post-apostolic times. Irenaeus left Asia Minor on a mission to Gaul and became Bishop of Lyons (177–202 A.D.), succeeding one who also may have heard the apostolic message at first hand. In his writings he deals with the inspiration of Scripture, and is convinced of the equal dignity of the Old and the New Testaments, although the Canon of the New was not then fixed. He has, however, no doubts as to the inspired nature of the Four Gospels, but the reasons he gives for his faith have seemed fanciful to the literally minded. He says¹ that as the visible form of God rested on the four-faced Cherubim, so Christ, when manifested to men, gave us His Gospel under a fourfold form, and on these Gospels He rests.

As the nature of the spiritual perception of the Apostles themselves has been but vaguely handed down to us² it is impossible to conjecture how deeply they were able to impress it upon the Fathers who succeeded them. It is probable, however, that Irenaeus had a conception more spiritual than fanciful when he likened the Four Gospels to the four-faced Cherubim. For when spiritually regarded “cherubs” denote a guard and a protection devised by Divine Providence to prevent any approach to interior spiritual and holy things, except by those who are moved by love ; and the face, the index of the mind, the window of the soul, corresponds to the soul which it reveals, however dimly. Here the soul is the Divine Goodness and Truth that shine through the faces of the Cherubim.

In the Jewish Dispensation the four Cherubim, each with four faces (Ezek. i. 5, 6), correspond to the

¹ See Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, p. 122.

² See Ch. ii., p. 16.

Letter of the Word, which serves both as an index and as a protection for the Divinity residing in the inner spiritual sense. Similarly the Letter of the Gospels, as the complete and perfect record of our Lord's life and teaching for the Christian Dispensation, reveals to those with eyes to see while it protects from those who would profane, that same Divinity which resides within their inner content.

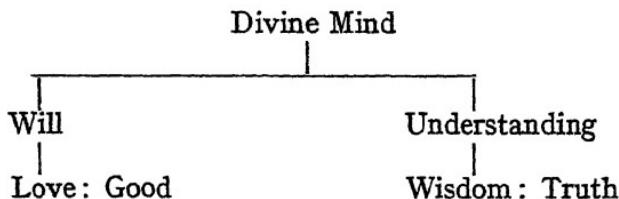
The number four is not accidental. Everywhere in the Word it represents something fundamental: in the fourfold nature of the Gospel it denotes the perfect union of the Divine Love with the Divine Wisdom as in their fullness they lie deep down in the simple narratives that to all appearance grew up fortuitously in the first two centuries of the Christian era. Fewer were not enough: more were superfluous, for the number is conditioned by the four principal states of the human mind in which, with all the gradations which render impossible the duplication of personality, all men everywhere and always, receive truth and appreciate goodness. These states correspond in general to the four quarters of the world, from whose spiritual representation the many other fourfold objects mentioned in the Word derive their particular significance.

The East, the quarter of the rising sun, corresponds to a state in which love predominates, love in its highest and holiest form, the Love of God, with a concordant spiritual intelligence fired by this Love. The West, the quarter of the setting sun, represents this state in a lower degree of intensity. The South represents a state in which the intellectual principle predominates, accompanied by a love of a lower nature, namely charity or love to the neighbour; while the North represents a state in which the intellectual principle gains in brilliance at the expense of spirituality. This is really a state of spiritual obscurity, and in it love, even charity, waxes cold.

As the number of the Gospels is not accidental neither is their order in the Canon. It begins with Matthew, the Gospel addressed to the lowest or most external type of mind, and expressed, as all the Gospels are, both with regard to their general teaching and to the details selected for inclusion, in the form best adapted to serve their spiritual purpose rather than to observe the limitations of a merely historical narrative. This is followed by Mark, and Mark was the particular disciple of Peter. In these two the story is treated in a more external manner with the emphasis laid on truth or faith, and with an approach of a more intellectual nature. In Luke the principle of love is stronger. This is presented with ever-increasing power in John, which is pre-eminently the Gospel of Love, to which is united the deepest intellectual insight into the spiritual character of the Divine story.¹

The order of the Gospels in the Canon may be further illustrated by reference to the spiritual constitution of man.²

In the Divine Mind there exist in complete union and in perfect harmony the faculties of the Will and Understanding, with the Principles of Love and Wisdom, which find ultimate expression in Good and Truth.



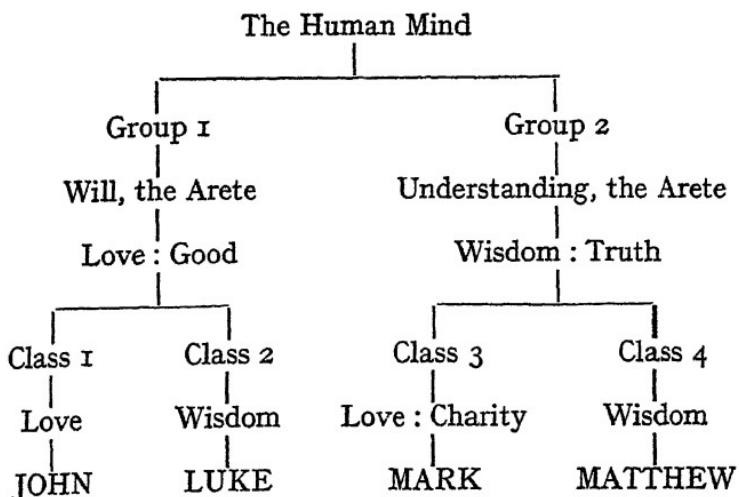
In the human mind these faculties and principles exist in a finite degree, but not in perfect harmony. In some men the will with love predominates over the

¹ See Noble, *Plenary Inspiration*, p. 325, for fuller consideration of the Fourfold Gospel.

² See Ch. i., p. 6.

understanding with wisdom. In others, the understanding with wisdom predominates.

These two groups, which include all men, are subdivided into four classes, depending upon the relative predominance of these faculties and principles in the individual.



Those of the first group whose peculiar genius, or Arete to use Plato's term,¹ is the will are divided into classes : in one class love predominates, in the other wisdom. Those of the second group, whose peculiar genius is the understanding, are also divided into two classes : in one love predominates, and in the other wisdom.

In the spiritual sense the Fourfold Gospel is the Gospel narrative adapted to all classes of minds, describing the spiritual development of the inner life and appealing to each in a manner most appropriate to its peculiar quality. Thus what certain critics have noted as a "tendency"² in the presumed writers of the Gospels ("who appear to have used the facts and incidents of the

¹ See *Republic*, Book 1, 353.

² See Davidson, *Introduction to New Testament*, pp. 336, 525.

Gospel story with a bias ") is really a spiritual distinction of a fundamental character. John is the Gospel of Love in its supreme sense, and Luke the Gospel of Love, but Love subordinated to the Understanding. Mark is the Gospel of Charity or love to the neighbour, and Matthew the Gospel of Charity, but Charity subordinated to the exercise of the intellect.

When one becomes aware of the necessity for a spiritual interpretation of the Gospels rather than a natural one based on the literal aspect of the narratives the less will be the importance attached to the problem of their harmony. There will always be a certain amount of intellectual pleasure in considering the resemblances that occur in the narratives, while there is general agreement that many of their differences are irreconcilable. Some may find an academic interest in a "diatessaron" such as that of Tatian, c. 170 A.D., amalgamating and unifying the Gospel stories ; but from the very nature of the records themselves it should be obvious that no harmony is intended. As has been indicated their differences are essential, and are as wide apart as the quarters of the globe ; and no reconstructed version or modification of the Gospel story, however excellent it may appear from a literary point of view, can take the place of the Fourfold Gospel.

3. MATTHEW. c. A.D. 66-70

It is generally agreed that this Gospel was not written by the Apostle whose name it bears. Papias, one of the Apostolic Fathers who was born in the latter half of the first century and was Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, c. 120 A.D., wrote a book on the Sayings of our Lord. He is the authority for the tradition that Matthew made a collection of these Sayings in Aramaic, the popular dialect of Hebrew, for the Christians in the province of

Judea. No copy of this collection has yet been found, but it no doubt contained more than merely reports of our Lord's discourses ; and as the Aramaic of Syria resembled closely that of Judea it obtained a wide circulation throughout Syria as well as Palestine, and was the source upon which subsequent records of our Lord's Life and Teaching were based. This book, probably known as the "Gospel of the Hebrews," remained the Sacred Book of the Ebionites, or "The Poor," the name given to the primitive Jewish Christians.

The Canonical Gospel of Matthew was written in Greek, and the name of Matthew was attached to it probably because it was largely based upon the earlier book attributed to him. There is no external evidence that might support the opinion that Matthew wrote this Gospel, and internal evidence is regarded by many as strongly against the likelihood.¹

It should be noted, however, that internal evidence, such as the record of unhistorical and mythical elements, does not necessarily betoken a late rather than a contemporary writer. For instance, the mythical language of Ch. xxiv., describing the incidents attending the Coming of the Son of Man, and the unhistorical nature of the account of the Temptation, Ch. iv., cannot be said to mark a late writer and not one who had been a hearer of our Lord's narrations. Rather does the nature of the language suggest that unhistorical and mythical are not appropriate epithets to describe it : the language itself demands a spiritual interpretation, and not a natural one based upon history or myth. Least of all does it throw any light upon the late or contemporary circumstance of the writer.

More impressive as proving the post-apostolicity of the Gospel is the suggestion that elements of a later time are incorporated in the narrative, if the presence of

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 337.

such elements were certain. But evidence regarding the lateness in respect of the material adduced is no more conclusive than in respect of the language. It is suggested that the command to the Eleven prior to His Ascension bears the mark of post-apostolic times, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Ch. xxviii. 19), whereas the formula of early Christian times was, "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts ii. 38); that is to say, a formula of the second century has been transferred to the Gospel narrative. The implication here is unwarranted. Matthew's formula is the same in effect as that of the Apostles. It carried to the early readers exactly the same meaning as did the formula of the Apostles. The name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost to them meant the name of Christ, for they had our Lord's teaching.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."
—John xiv. 9.

They also believed that from Him the Holy Ghost proceeds,

"He breathed on them, and saith unto them,
Receive ye the Holy Ghost."—John xx. 22.

The unity of the Godhead in Christ was the central fact of the Apostles' belief, and the formula of Matthew confirms it.

In general it may be said that the evidences of lateness, as of any definite time, in the writing of the Gospels are not conclusive, and this indefiniteness in matters which appear so important in the Letter is further illustration of the impersonal and unhistorical nature of the Gospels as part of the Word. The Gospels are spiritual records, compiled under Divine direction using as an external basis a fourfold presentation of fact and tradition that

should best embody and exemplify their universal spiritual message. Thus the temporal significance of historical fact and the foundation upon which tradition rests are of little moment when compared with the spiritual realities they enshrine; and the difficulty of establishing fact and explaining tradition does not affect the spiritual purpose of the narrative.

Notwithstanding the great scholarship that has been brought to bear upon the external form of the Gospels their actual compilers are unknown, as is also the actual date of their compilation. These are external features which fade into insignificance as their inner reality is approached, and moreover, the names by which the Gospels are designated are part of the Divine purpose in rendering them tangible and memorable to the externally as well as to the spiritually minded.

The Name Matthew

Most readers realize that the leading feature of this Gospel's narrative is to declare the comprehensive nature of Christianity by appealing not only to the low spirituality represented by the Jew but also, by the exercise of the widest spirit of charity, to the moral nature of the Gentile who is affirmative to the new truths when appropriately taught.¹ This double characteristic is notably illustrated in the first place by the convenient grouping of the material of the story for didactic purposes, as the Sermon on the Mount, Ch. v.-vii., and the Parables, Ch. xiii.; and in the second place by the assignation of this Gospel to the Apostle named Matthew. For the name comes from a word meaning "to give," and a predominant feature in his character is shown by his giving, after his call, a feast to Jesus at which a great company of publicans and others sat down (Luke v. 29). The attributing to the Lord and the imparting to others of the good things

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 360.

of the spiritual life are here pictured, and the name Matthew, as well as Levi by which he was also known, corresponds to charity, the spirit that gives.¹ Thus the general nature of the spiritual sense of this Gospel is aptly denoted by these two outstanding features, the didactic method employed in the form of the narrative and the character of the Apostle under whose name it is written.

(1) *Contents*

The story of our Lord's Life and Teaching² as recorded by Matthew falls readily into three sections.³ The first, Ch. i.-iv., describes the circumstances of His birth, the flight into Egypt, the return to Nazareth, the office of John the Baptist, the Temptations and the beginnings of our Lord's public life in Galilee. In section two, Ch. v.-xviii., is an account of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. The last section, Ch. xix.-xxviii., relates His labours in Judea, particularly in Jerusalem, and the closing scenes of His earthly mission, the Passion and the Resurrection.

(2) *The Genealogy.* Ch. i.

The story opens with the genealogy of our Lord traced from Abraham, the Father of the Jewish nation, down to Joseph and Mary, of whom was born Jesus. Luke's Gospel, the other synoptic story which records the infancy and childhood of our Lord, presents the genealogy from a different point of view, tracing it upward to Adam, the son of God. Each Gospel presents the genealogy in accordance with the particular spiritual purpose underlying its narrative. Each genealogy,

¹ See Bruce, *Commentary on Revelation*, p. 416.

² For a summary Exposition of the Spiritual Sense see Clowes on *St. Matthew*.

³ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 345.

however, exhibits deviations from historical accuracy which no Biblical research has been able to explain. The difficulties arise in all cases from regarding them as historical or textual errors which mar the perfection of the text ; but the difficulties of literal discrepancies disappear when their spiritual significance is understood. Perfect continuity in the delineation of spiritual circumstances is observed in the inner content, and this is of paramount importance.

One striking example of this may be taken from the genealogy of Matthew. There it is stated :

“ All the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations ; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations ; and from the carrying away into Babylon to Christ are fourteen generations.” Ch. i. 17.

Here the generations are divided into three groups, each said to contain fourteen ; but the second group, from David to the Captivity, contains only thirteen generations. Josias, representing the thirteenth generation from David, according to Matthew, was succeeded on the throne by each of his three sons, and during the reign of the eldest, Jehoiakim, the nation was led into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. His son, Jeconias, follows Josias in the genealogy and begins the third group of fourteen. The significant fact is that Jehoiakim is omitted from the list. If this had been merely a slip on the part of the writer of the Canonical Gospel it could have been corrected by any contemporary ; but this omission, with others, once made has been perpetuated in the Letter, sanctioned by the Divine Author on account of its spiritual import.

The genealogy is an epitomized record of the hereditaments which belonged to the human nature our Lord assumed on His Incarnation. The legacy of heredity of the Jewish nation handed down from generation to

generation finally centred in Mary, of whom Jesus was born. The various principles and qualities belonging to that heredity are represented by the heads of royal families by whom the generations were continued.

It must be borne in mind, however, that as character is not hereditary neither are the principles and qualities, good and bad, that constitute character transmissible by heredity. What are handed down are tendencies towards that character which the members of an ancestry have acquired by choice and practice. Influenced very largely by environment tendencies to evil may be resisted : thus arises temptation, while tendencies to good may be cultivated and ultimated in the life. As the history of the Jewish race from Abraham to Joseph and Mary was one long tale of decadence in religious thought and life so the heredity that had been accumulating was in the main an overwhelming weight of tendencies to evil and falsity which men were no longer willing or able to resist. This heredity of tendencies, not of evil, our Lord assumed in the Humanity that was born of Mary. This He did in order that He might meet in temptation and overcome on the plane of humanity, in all points, throughout His whole earthly sojourn the forces of evil that were threatening the spiritual destruction of the human race.

There is one sin, however, the tendency to which was not assumed in the Humanity of our Lord. It is the unforgivable sin of profanation against the Holy Ghost. This is the sin by which the consuming lust of self-love opposes and irretrievably destroys in the soul of man in whom it once ruled the Divine Love as it labours through the Holy Spirit by Word and example to win the salvation of men. This sin is represented in the Word by Jehoiakim, whose crowning act of an infamous life was to cut up and burn the roll of the Word of the Lord dictated to Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvi). For this reason the name of Jehoiakim is omitted from the genealogy ; and other

omissions and divergence from the facts of history are likewise explained by reference to their spiritual significance.¹

(3) *Galilee*

This Gospel's account of the infancy of our Lord, and His early ministry in Galilee are strikingly significant of the spiritual purpose of Matthew. The visit to Egypt is representative of that early period of instruction in the basic principles of religion essential to all spiritual development ; and His life and work in Galilee correspond to the activity of the Divine in the spiritual experience of men who, while living remote from the centre of ceremonial worship, yet have respect to the elementary principles of goodness and truth. Galilee of the Gentiles, as this Gospel calls it, represents that phase of spiritual life where the realities of the Church come into closest and most fruitful contact with the things of the world ; just as the geographical Galilee was the part of Palestine that lay adjacent to the great trade routes of Syria and the seaports Tyre and Sidon, and was the source of that great missionary enterprise which, starting from Antioch, spread the new faith over Asia, into Europe and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

(4) *The Second Coming and the New Church.*
Ch. xxiv.

That form of the Church, however, which our Lord was so unostentatiously founding was not long in developing those elements of disintegration which were ultimately to cause its ruin. The disputes of the disciples were symptomatic of the dissensions and heresies that, with their attendant evils, led to its consummation. Our Lord who had come into the world for the commencement of the Church foresaw also its end, and foretold

¹ For further explanation of deviations from historical accuracy in the Genealogies see Rendell, *Peculiarities of the Bible*, p. 418.

that He would come again to establish a New Church which should succeed the Old. This is the general subject of Ch. xxiv., a chapter that remains an enigma to those who seek for its meaning in a literal interpretation. The language He employs to proclaim His purpose is that correspondential language in which the whole Word is written, language so adapted as to veil the real meaning from those who would only deride and profane the truth if plainly declared. How far it was understood by His immediate hearers we have no means of knowing. Only the external literal story had come down to us, and the narrative, disconnected and unhistorical¹ in outward appearance, affords a meaning of religious value and a universal appeal only when spiritually understood.²

This Ch. xxiv. begins with the significant statement that Jesus went out, and departed from the Temple. This is significant because it discloses the state of the Jewish Church at that time, when the Divine was no longer present in its worship, but prophetic as it represents the state of the Christian Church when it should reach its consummation. This state our Lord foretells when He discloses that not one stone would be left upon another ; that is to say, not one truth would be left standing of that magnificent system of doctrine upon which the worship of the Church was built.

The disciples to whom this discourse is addressed are all those who have within them the principles of goodness and truth which make them followers of the Lord. They inquire what shall be the sign of His Coming and of the end of the age.³ "Age" here means dispensation or

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 369.

² For a detailed exposition see Swedenborg, *Prefaces to Arcana Caelestia*, Ch. xxvi.-xxxii.

³ By the use of the word "world" for "age" in this connection the English translators have introduced quite unnecessarily a difficulty to the understanding of this passage, a difficulty that could have been present to the thought only of the most externally minded disciple.

phase of the Church's existence. The Lord's reply is one that only Omniscience could have framed. Looking forward for eighteen centuries to the "end of the age" He summarizes in one brief moment the various stages that were to succeed one another in the course of the Church's decadence in their inevitable order: the dissensions as to what is true and what is good, v. 3-7; the despising of these principles, v. 8-14; the refusal to acknowledge them, v. 15-18; and their profanation in thought and life, v. 19-22. Then follows a description of the Church when these principles have been so violated and destroyed, except with a few who hold fast to the truth and to the life of charity, v. 23-28.

Having paved the way for a direct answer to the inquiry of the disciples He now describes the signs of the end of the Church and of His Second Coming. The language is still the language of the material world but the meaning intended is spiritual. Neither the sun, which is love to the Lord, nor the moon, which is charity to the neighbour, is visible in the spiritual firmament. All knowledge of the good and the true disappears, as the stars fall from heaven, while the moving of the powers of heaven denotes the shaking of the very foundations of the Church. Thus is described prophetically the consummation of the first Christian Church; but there follows immediately a description of the establishment of the New Church. This is accomplished by the Lord at His Second Coming, which Coming is His appearance as Divine Truth, appearing not in the material clouds of heaven but in the clouds of the literal sense of the Word. This is the sign or the appearing of the Son of Man, the name which denotes the Lord as to Divine Truth, that is, the Word with all its content of Divinity by which He comes into the world, suffers, judges, redeems and saves. To the New Church are to be gathered the elect, not any specially chosen few, but all who will receive and make

their own the principles of goodness and truth that constitute the Church. They are those who respond to the trumpet sound, which represents the evangelizing summons of the Divine Truth as it makes its appeal through ministering angels, as these principles are called in the Letter, that do the Lord's service, v. 29-31.

(5) Conclusion

In the succeeding chapters events of transcending spiritual importance follow each other in quick succession. Opportunity is taken, however, in the Parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents and The Sheep and the Goats to show the folly of those who, having the truth, refuse to live according to it. Then comes the Last Supper, in the course of which the Lord gives the solemn warning that it is the lust of power, seeking to dispute dominion with the Almighty Himself, which brings about the destruction of the Son of Man,

“ He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish,
the same shall betray Me.”—Ch. xxvi. 23.

The Betrayal, the Trial and the Crucifixion itself are events in which culminate the concentrated forces of all evil: but these do not conquer. Resistance to them represents the final and supreme temptation that our Lord underwent. When He rose from the grave every evil that can assail the human race had been met and overcome. Every tendency to evil which had been His by heredity in the Humanity He had assumed was removed, and that Humanity became wholly Divine. In His Glorification He went to the Father.

That most terrible tragedy of all time has its effect intensified beyond comprehension when it is realized that it not only happened once in the history of the Jewish Church and nation but was repeated in the Church our Lord founded, and is re-enacted each time in the

spiritual history of every individual who profanes and destroys Divine Truth in his own soul. (See Heb. vi. 6).

It is fitting that this Gospel should conclude with our Lord's last charge to His disciples, expressed in terms that emphasize the universality of its appeal. He declares that all power has been given to Him, in whom is the Divine Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit ; that all nations are to be taught and baptized in His name, and that He is with His disciples to the end of the "age." This was a comforting assurance to those whose literal minds expected an early end to the Church and a speedy return of the Lord ; but it is an assurance profoundly comforting to those who believe that the "age" of the New Church of His own prophecy shall never end.

Gospels, we note that Eusebius in his History quotes Clement of Alexandria, c. A.D. 200, to this effect :¹

“ That the Gospels containing the Genealogies were written first ; that the occasion of writing the Gospel according to Mark was this : Peter, having publicly preached the Word at Rome, and having spoken the Gospel by the Spirit, many present exhorted Mark to write the things which had been spoken, since he had long accompanied Peter, and remembered what he said ; and that when he had composed the Gospel, he delivered it to them who had asked it of him. Which, when Peter knew, he neither forbade nor encouraged it.”

It is difficult to see how the two statements relating to Mark’s work can be reconciled, namely that he wrote reminiscences of Peter’s preaching after his death and also before that event. Moreover the remark by Papias that Mark did not write his work in order, whereas the Canonical Gospel is as orderly as the other Synoptics, has given rise to the view that what he did write was more in the nature of notes, which were afterwards employed by a later writer, who, retaining the title Mark, amplified and remodelled them into the Gospel as we now have it. The student of origins will find that much deeply interesting literature has been written on the question as to whether Mark or some one later was the actual writer of this Gospel. On the whole external evidence is inconclusive on the point that Mark wrote the Canonical Gospel, while internal evidence appears to favour the view that the Gospel is a late compilation, later even than Matthew and Luke, and also that it was written by an unknown hand later than Mark.²

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 461.

² *Ibid.*, p. 470, for a detailed summary of the internal evidence.

It is extremely unlikely that more definite knowledge of the actual compiler and date of compilation of this Gospel will ever be forthcoming ; whereas the desire to recognize the Gospel in its proper place in the Word as of special significance to the spiritual state of the Church and individual must increase. The comparative insignificance of historical and textual details must become more and more evident as it is recognized that the Books of the Word have a Canonical order as well as a Canonical content, and that the Authorized Version adequately preserves both.

(1) *Significance of the Title, John Mark*

Proper names in the Word are mentioned only with reference to their spiritual representation. John, which means "Jehovah is gracious" corresponds to the good derived from love to the Lord, and the consequent good of life or charity. Mark means "Hammer," and corresponds to the truth of faith in ultimates, the truth that triumphs over the difficulties of everyday life. As has been suggested in the previous chapter the first two Gospels embody the story of our Lord's life and work for the two lower planes of life dominated by truth in the understanding and represented by N. and S. in the quarters of the earth ; and as in Matthew the intellectual appeal is stronger than the emotional or affectional, so in Mark the predominating feature is the emphasis laid on the works of charity, including such as healing, involved in the mission of our Lord as the Messiah and in the activities of His disciples.

(2) *Contents*

The narrative may be divided into four sections : an Introduction, Ch. i. 13 ; the Ministry in Galilee, Ch. i. 14–Ch. x. ; the Ministry in Judea, Ch. xi.–xv., and the

Conclusion, Ch. xvi. This division is more or less arbitrary, because it is evident that events are frequently grouped more according to subject-matter than with regard to time. It also happens that the Evangelists do not always agree as to the place that should be assigned to certain Sayings and events in the Ministry, if a semblance of chronology is to be maintained. However, any division of the text based on the Letter must always be artificial, for the position and sequence of incidents in the Gospels, as well as the circumstances attending them, are not to be explained, or credited, by their conformity to chronology or even to literal fact, but by the inner significance which the details bear in the spiritual development of the subject under consideration in the various Gospels which record them.

The fact that Matthew and Luke contain nearly everything that is in Mark (the subject-matter peculiar to Mark extends to just over twenty verses) partly accounts for the secondary place long accorded to Mark in popular favour. It is, moreover, lacking in reports of what our Lord said ; and Matthew and Luke, by giving prominence to the discourses of our Lord, reached a much wider public in the early days of missionary enterprise because of their preaching value. This is in accord with the general purpose of these two Evangelists which is mainly didactic, their appeal being rather intellectual, as contrasted with the more affectional appeal of Mark and John, an appeal which Mark expresses with graphic, picturesque and vivid details.

(3) *The Son of God.* Ch. i.

The profound manner in which the subject of the Gospel story is treated by Mark is indicated in the first verse :

“ The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
The Son of God.”

Jesus Christ is called the Son of God. By this term the Jews understood the Messiah; but whatever meaning the Jews attached to this term there has grown up the idea that the Son of God is a Divine Person from eternity, a Second Person in the Godhead.¹ That this is not so may be seen by considering this name along with the companion name, Son of Man, also applied to our Lord. The Humanity assumed by our Lord on His Incarnation is known as the Son of Man. This is the Divine Truth, the Word that was made flesh.² At His Resurrection all that was infirmly human had been removed, and it was made Divine becoming one with the Divine Love or the Divine Good, which is meant by the term "Son of God." Thus the Divine Truth and the Divine Good, from which proceeds the Holy Spirit—the three Essentials, not Persons of the Godhead—are united in our risen and Glorified Lord. When, therefore, our Lord is called by Mark the Son of God the Gospel sets out at the very beginning the particular end for which it is written, namely to proclaim the story of the Messiahship of our Lord and His identity with the One and only God, and at the same time to emphasize charity as the predominant note in the Gospel.

(4) *Isaiah and the Prophets.* Ch. i.

"As it is written in the prophets. . . ."—v. 2-3.

In the spiritual sense personalities disappear and what they represent take their place in the spiritual sequence. The Prophets all represent the Lord as to some phase of activity of the Divine Truth, so that the phrase "in the prophets" means "in prophecy" without specifying the phase that is appropriate to the occasion. In some MSS. of high value the name of Isaiah for "the prophets" is

¹ See Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, No. 94.

² See Ch. xx., p. 219.

used (R.V.), although an extract from Malachi is included in the quotation, to represent prophecy respecting the Lord as he is treated in Isaiah, namely with particular reference to His work of Incarnation and Redemption. As this work is pre-eminently the purpose of His Messiahship, and as Mark emphasizes this in its own way, that is in its affectional aspect, the reading of the Authorized Version is sufficiently significant. It has been assumed by some that the writer of Mark is in error when Malachi is not mentioned by name with Isaiah. The same general purpose, however, pervades the prophecy of Malachi as qualifies Isaiah, namely to predict the Coming of the Lord with love. So that the use of the name of Isaiah, as including that of Malachi, in place of "the prophets" implies not error or ignorance but profound knowledge.

(5) *Feeding the Multitudes.* Ch. vi., viii.

It is considered by many that the two accounts recorded by Matthew and Mark, with differences according to their own peculiar purpose, refer to the same incident. It is, therefore, imagined that historical accuracy would have been secured and nothing of importance lost had one narrative only been retained : but from the spiritual point of view both are necessary. In the case of the feeding of the 5000 there is represented the nourishing by the Lord of those in the Church who remain faithful to the principles of truth they still possess, linked up in their souls with the love of what is good. The twelve baskets of fragments that were gathered indicate that those who are so fed at the Lord's hand acquire in unstinted measure spiritual food.

The feeding of the 4000 is not a redundant account of the same miracle. It represents the same spiritual process, but in circumstances sufficiently varied to warrant a separate narrative. The differing details show that development in different states of spiritual life is

described, and a message of much wider application is thereby taught. The numbers¹ employed in the two stories when considered literally do not contribute anything to the spiritual lessons suggested by the narratives. It is only when they are divested of their arithmetical significance and regarded as correspondential that they are seen to qualify the spiritual states of untold numbers in the Church in their re-action to the operations of Divine Truth and Divine Love.

(6) *The Young Man Who Followed Jesus after His Betrayal.* Ch. xiv. 51-52

Viewed from the standpoint of the Letter this incident seems not only trivial but also out of harmony with the gravity of the stupendous, inevitable train of events that was in progress. Is it a capricious insertion by Mark, who was himself the young man, to show his devotion to his Lord? Such at least is the suggestion favoured by many to explain its presence in the narrative.² A much deeper reason, however, underlies its record. It is a spiritual picture flashed upon the screen of these earthly happenings and fixed for ever in their dreadful sequence. The Son of Man had been betrayed. The Divine Truth had no supporter. All had fled who had sworn to stand by Him, and He was being haled, surrounded by a hostile crowd, before the whole responsible body of the official Church for trial. At this moment the hand that writes this Gospel pictures with grim reality the Jewish Church, stripped by false traditions of the last vestige of truth that scarcely covered the stark evil of its life, shamelessly repudiating its own Divine Head. The narrative is part of the Gospel story characteristic of Mark; and beyond its application to the unrepentant Jewish Church it depicts that friendly love, which Mark specially represents,

¹ See note on Numbers, Ch. xii., p. 116.

² See Mark, Cambridge Bible, p. 180.

appealing to those still open to repentance who violate Divine Truth to realize the enormity of the evil they are perpetrating before it is too late.

(7) *The Last Twelve Verses, with the Signs that Follow Belief.* Ch. xvi.

Whether the Last Twelve Verses should be recognized as an integral part of this Gospel has long been a matter of controversy. Doubts about their authenticity are raised by the fact that the two earliest MSS., the Sinaitic and the Vatican, do not contain them. These MSS. end with the words : "for they were afraid," v. 8. With these two exceptions the verses are found in all the best Greek MSS., and in most of the copies of the Old Latin Versions, as well as in the Vulgate. Their authentic nature, moreover, is attested by many of the early Greek and Latin Fathers. Probably owing to the influence of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. many subsequent Versions omit these verses, and the Scholia, or explanatory notes, of many MSS. say that Mark's Gospel ended with verse 8 in the most ancient or more accurate copies.¹

It was felt, however, that v. 8 did not furnish a very satisfactory ending to the Gospel, so a second ending, shorter than the other, was provided by some writer, and it is used to conclude the Gospel in an old Latin MS., the Codex Bobiensis. This ending is as follows :²

"And they reported briefly to Peter and his friends all the things they were charged to tell. And after these things Jesus Himself sent forth through them from the East even to the West the holy and incorruptible message of eternal salvation."

As though hesitating between the respective merits of the two endings some writers give both, following the shorter

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 511.

² See Mark, Cambridge Bible, Intro. p. xl.

one with the longer. The two endings are so found in the Codex Regius and the Codex Athous Laurae of the eighth century.

The weight of textual evidence which has carried the Canonical ending into the Authorized Version is regarded by many as overwhelming, and it is supported by a plausible reason put forward by Dean Burgon for the omission of the passage from certain authoritative MSS. He points out that in Lectionaries used in the early Church the order of the Gospels was John, Matthew, Luke, Mark. The last twelve verses formed a separate reading, the previous one, ending at v. 8 being that read on the Second Sunday after Easter, having the word "telos," "the end," to indicate its conclusion. Dean Burgon's suggestion is that through long use the last reading, consisting of the verses in question in the Lectionary employed by the copyists of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., had got torn off, and the scribes mistook the word "telos," a liturgical note, to indicate the end of the Gospel,¹ in which case the omission of the verses does not prove that these MSS. regard them as not authentic. Dean Burgon, however, presents strong evidence apart from this suggestion to support the right of these words to stand in the text, evidence that will repay careful consideration.²

On the other hand strong opposition to the inclusion of this passage comes from those who regard it as savouring too much of the miraculous and the superstitious. It sets up a criterion for believers, the performing of miracles, which, it is asserted, is not attainable. In this connection it is useful to notice what Professor Huxley says of

¹ See Smyth, *Our Bible in the Making*, p. 178

For Criticism of this suggestion see Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Vol. I, p. 517.

² See Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses*; Burgon and Miller, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*; and *Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*.

miracles in his monograph on, *Hume, English Men of Letters*, Ch. vii. He points out that Hume's definition of a miracle as "a violation of the laws of nature" is a definition of nothing. For nature is the sum of all phenomena presented to our experience, and every event must be taken as part of nature, until proof to the contrary is supplied. And such proof is, from the nature of the case, impossible (p. 131).

Moreover, employing an example cited by Hume, he states 'that were lead to remain suspended in air the occurrence would be a "miracle" in the sense of a wonderful event—which is all that the word miracle means ; but no one trained in the methods of science would imagine any law of nature was really violated. He would simply set to work to investigate the conditions under which so highly unexpected an occurrence took place, and thereby enlarge his experience and modify his hitherto unduly narrow conception of the laws of nature.' In other words, while it is true that the laws of nature are inviolable, he who would understand miracles must seek for a law which will explain their occurrence. This explanation is only forthcoming when it is realized that a law of nature is nothing but the expression in the natural world of a spiritual law : that natural occurrences are results of spiritual causes.

The signs or manifestations, called by some "miracles," are said to follow them that believe. Faith is the necessary condition ; but not faith that is a matter of words only. True faith is an acknowledgment in the understanding united with obedience in the will. Only as faith finds expression in the life is it properly so called. True faith is something working an internal change, altering for the better our loves, desires and motives, and consequently changing the outward life. It is something internal, or spiritual, and the wonderful things that follow are also internal. They take place in the spiritual world

of the soul : the signs that follow have primarily an internal signification.

“ In My name shall they cast out devils.” As the quality and character of the Lord are made one’s own, evil loves—all included in these two, the love of self and the love of the world—are driven from the heart.

“ They shall speak with new tongues.” A new language will be used to express the purified loves, desires and motives that rule the life. It is a language more closely in touch with the spiritual which is now being realized.¹

“ They shall take up serpents.” The serpent corresponds to the low sensual nature of man that lies in closest contact with the world and the things of the world. Believers shall take this up, or elevate and purify it to become a fit foundation for the higher spiritual life.

“ And if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.” The deadly things that may be drunk without hurt are the opposites of truth. They are the falsities that prevail all around. The poison of false and vicious words and thoughts may be temptingly offered in every sphere of life, in ignorance or in malice, yet such shall be harmless. The mere drinking in of what is false is fraught with no harm to believers, for their heart is pure : they do not allow falsity to lead them into the practice of evil.

“ They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” The hand of believers, or rather the power that the hand represents, is not their own. The Almighty Power of the Lord in Whom they believe is invoked at all times to heal the sick within themselves, the diseases of the soul.

These signs, a coherent sequence in the spiritual life of believers, may well have had physical expression in the early days of Christianity, for then spiritual law found a more ready outlet in the natural world. There

¹ See Ch. ii.

is nothing inherently impossible in the outward performance of these signs : it would be unscientific to deny the possibility of their happening. It is enough that they are not to be looked for now. Belief in their literal performance may have helped to spread the new faith in its infancy, though this was never the main purpose of miracles. Man has passed beyond the stage when external miracles could induce a true faith. Christianity is now broad-based on the inner spiritual realities that function in the universal soul of man. It is still, and everlastingly true that "these signs shall follow them that believe."

The spiritual value of the Last Twelve Verses, concluding with the Ascension and the consequent missionary activity of the disciples, rises above the objections that can be urged against their authenticity. If the conclusion may lack the literary polish and the literal homogeneity desiderated by many critics, it is yet in perfect harmony with the spiritual purpose of this version of the Gospel story which bears the name and exhibits the peculiar quality of Mark.

2. LUKE. *c. A.D. 60-110*

Very little is known of Luke to whom the third Gospel is ascribed by tradition ; his name is also associated with the writing of the Acts. Some records say he was a native of Philippi, others of Troas and others of Antioch, and it is generally agreed that he was a physician, but nothing is known with certainty of the place of his birth, or of his career before he met Paul with whom there grew up a close and enduring friendship.

In consequence of the use of the pronoun "we" in Acts xvi. 10, it is assumed that he joined Paul and Silas at Troas on their missionary journey and proceeded with them as far as Philippi. Here he remained till he was visited by Paul as he was returning home on his third

journey, and he accompanied the Apostle to Caesarea and Jerusalem. During Paul's two year's imprisonment at Caesarea it is conjectured that Luke remained at Jerusalem but kept in close touch with him, and under his superintendence wrote the Gospel which bears his name. This is no more than a plausible conjecture, unsupported by any historical evidence.¹

On Paul's journey to Rome to carry his appeal to Caesar he was accompanied by his faithful physician friend. Five years after his acquittal in A.D. 63 Paul is again on trial at Rome, but there was to be no acquittal this time, and Luke was the only one of his habitual friends who remained with him to comfort him to the last. After the death of his master there is nothing on record regarding Luke : even the place, manner and time of his death are unknown.

As Luke had been the disciple and companion of Paul for several years the tradition naturally arose that he wrote this Gospel if not at the dictation at least under the supervision and with the approval of the Apostle. Thus it has been supposed that this Gospel embodies the Apostle's thought and teaching. One of the earliest references to Luke occurs in the Muratorian "Fragment on the Canon," c. A.D. 170,² in which it is stated that the Gospel of Luke the Physician stands third in the Canon, and that its writer was a companion of Paul. Irenaeus, c. A.D. 120–202, furnishes the same testimony, and other early Fathers confirm the view that Luke's Gospel was generally regarded as the expression of Paul's "gospel" or teaching of the Good News. This view is greatly strengthened by the fact that not only the teaching of the Pauline Epistles but also their language is vividly reflected by Luke. The Book itself, however, does not claim to be written by Luke, and in fact it does not mention him by name.

¹ See Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 612.

² See Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, p. 110.

The supposed writer of this Gospel has been identified mainly by inference from Luke's companionship with Paul during his imprisonment at Caesarea and finally at Rome, and from Paul's references to him in Col. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. iv. 11. It is, however, in keeping with the nature of this Gospel as part of the Word that its writing cannot be assigned with any degree of certainty to Luke or to any other disciple or Apostle. It has survived as Canonical from many versions of the Gospel story which were current at the beginning of the second century.

Notably amongst these is that of Marcion, c. A.D. 120-170, who is supposed to have used the Gospel according to Luke as the basis of one which should restore the gospel or teaching of St. Paul to its original purity. Luke's Gospel, however, with the other three of the Canon has survived as part of the Word while all the others have either perished or remain in greater or less esteem as part of the world's literature, the conscious product of human authorship.

(1) *The Name Luke*

In conformity with the spiritual purpose of this Gospel the name Luke has been assigned to it not so much as the name of its writer or compiler as significant of its peculiar character. With the Gospel according to John it forms a pair whose predominant purpose is to present the Gospel of Love—Love in its highest form, Love to the Lord, with truth as a subordinate principle, just as the two preceding Gospels, Matthew and Mark, present the Gospel of Charity, or love to the neighbour but with truth as a predominant principle. As this supreme love may be grounded in the two faculties of the will and the understanding, it is represented by John or love in the will, and by Luke or love in the understanding. Luke denotes the dominant character

of the intellect, the name coming from the word meaning "light," and spiritually intelligence. Occupying the place corresponding to Matthew in the first pair of the Gospels, Luke is also predominantly distinguished by its historical character. It also gives prominence to discourse, as well as to song and hymn, features which render it peculiarly suitable for teaching and preaching, that is for making the Gospel's appeal through the intellect.

(2) *Contents*

The narrative may be grouped into seven divisions, regarded merely from the chronological point of view. It should be remembered, however, that such divisions are of use for reference only. The order in the literal narrative, especially as certain incidents may appear out of order, has not been adopted to conform to chronological considerations, but primarily because it is the sequence demanded by the spiritual development of the subject in the internal sense. This is the explanation also of the inclusion of matter peculiar to Luke, and the omission of matter otherwise unaccountably left out. Endeavours to arrange the contents upon any subjective principle other than the internal sense have not been productive of much success: they have necessarily been arbitrary and fanciful.

1. Ch. i.-ii. 52: Introduction, Announcement of the Fore-runner and of the Saviour, and the Narrative of their Birth and Early Life.
2. Ch. iii. 1-38: Preparation for the Ministry of the Lord; Preaching of John; Baptism of Jesus and His Genealogy.
3. Ch. iv. 1-ix. 50: The Temptation; the Ministry in Galilee.
4. Ch. ix. 51-xix. 27: Incidents and Teaching from Galilee to Jerusalem.

5. Ch. xix. 28 - xxi. 38 : Entry into Jerusalem ; Incidents of the Temple and Signs of the Second Coming.
6. Ch. xxii.-xxiii. 56 : The Last Supper ; Betrayal ; Trial ; Crucifixion ; Burial.
7. Ch. xxiv. : The Resurrection ; Appearances of the Risen Lord ; Ascension.

(3) *The Introduction.* Ch. i.

The formal and unique preface to this Gospel emphasizes at the outset the peculiar character of the Book. It announces the certainty of the intellectual basis on which the Gospel rests ; and it is addressed to all who are in love to the Lord. This we gather from the name of the person to whom, in the Letter, the Gospel is ostensibly written. Who the individual was who is called Theophilus we do not know. We are not intended to know, for we do not need to know. His personality is of no moment : the Gospel is for everyone who is inwardly called by that name—a lover of God.

The preface also makes it clear that the writer is not to be looked for amongst those who were original eye-witnesses of the Gospel drama. He is content to remain the anonymous compiler of a Book of the Word. And, what is just as significant, he makes no mention of any indebtedness to Paul for instruction or even guidance, a matter which seems unaccountable to literalists, who do not realize that the authority of the Divine Author of the Word in its final form may not be claimed or even shared by any writer, or compiler, or teacher.

(4) *The Genealogy.* Ch. iii.

It has already been indicated (See Ch. xx., p. 214) that the significance of the genealogies is spiritual, not historical, and that their value to the Church and to the individual has not been appreciated until something of

their spiritual content has been perceived. While the genealogy of Matthew describes the decline in spiritual life as represented by the Jewish Church and nation, necessitating the assumption of a Humanity by which our Lord might reach and save the human race, the genealogy of Luke describes the various stages step by step in the spiritual work of Redemption and Regeneration of man, and the Glorification of the Humanity our Lord assumed. Matthew describes His descent into the world : Luke describes His ascent to the Father. In this upward progress of spiritual development, which has its counterpart in the Church and in the individual, the various stages passed through are represented by the principles regulating these states ; and these principles, from lowest to highest, are denoted by the persons named in the genealogy : the names in order represent their own spiritual quality. Much perplexity has been occasioned among Biblical scholars by the insertion of a name for which there does not appear to be any warrant. It should be remembered, however, that names before Abraham do not denote historical persons : they have only a spiritual, not a personal significance. The name in question is Cainan, whom Luke gives as the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah. Ch. iii. 36, 37.

This Cainan does not appear in Gen. xi. 12, as the son of Arphaxad in any Hebrew MS. of the Old Testament, although it is given in the Septuagint, probably due to the influence of Luke on some Christian transcribers. Thus it would seem that the writer of this Gospel has inserted the name in the genealogy by mistake or by design. Those who suggest it may have been by mistake¹ have no regard to the spiritual value of names, and, moreover, they raise much more difficult problems of inspiration.

¹ See Luke, Cambridge Bible, p. 374.

When the catalogue of names as given by Luke is considered spiritually this one is seen to take its necessary and coherent place in the Divine order of principles involved. It is fourth from Noah and occupies the same place as the other Cainan does in the list from Adam. By Adam¹ is denoted the celestial state in which Love and Wisdom, or Goodness and Truth, are in perfect union and harmony ; and the Adamic Cainan represents a state distinctly removed from the celestial in which Wisdom is not yet conjoined to Love, as perception of truth has not yet become completely intuitive.

By Noah² is represented the spiritual state in which the understanding is the predominant faculty in the inner life, and the name Cainan is mentioned fourth in order from Noah, as it is mentioned fourth from Adam, in order to denote a state of intelligence as far removed from its highest spiritual level as the corresponding celestial Cainan is from the celestial or Adamic state.

(5) *The Transfiguration.* Ch. ix.

Variations in the accounts of the Transfiguration may be taken as further illustrating the distinctive spiritual purposes of the Synoptists. The story of the Transfiguration itself, recorded as a vision seen by three disciples only, does not vary in its essential features. Peter, James and John accompanied the Lord as He ascended a mountain, as Luke says, to pray, that is to enter into closer and more conscious communion with the Father dwelling within Him. The vision glorious that was presented to them was a vision seen by their spiritual sight. From the glowing countenance of the Lord was beaming the Divine Love, and He was clothed with Divine Truth as with a brilliant garment. By Him stood Moses and Elias, one on each side, representing the Word of the Old Testament as to the Law and

¹ See Ch. x.

² See Ch. xi.

Prophecy. Through the cloud that obscured their vision the disciples heard a voice saying : " This is My beloved Son : hear Him ; " and on the passing of the voice Jesus stood, alone.

The spiritual experience of this transcendent scene was not for these disciples only ; although it pictured to them, as no other teaching could, how the Divine Love and Wisdom centred in their Lord. The lesson it teaches is of universal application. The spiritual lesson for all time is that when faith, charity and the good works of charity, represented by Peter, James and John, are the predominant principles that lead the soul to follow the Lord in love, the mind can grasp the central fact of all religion—the unity of the Godhead in Christ, and can hear the voice of Divine Truth speaking through the cloud of the Letter of His Word.

Matthew and Mark say that this event took place six days after Peter's great avowal. This is to represent the period of spiritual labour, trial and combat that must elapse, after the acknowledgment of faith in the Lord, before the seventh day of triumph, peace and glorious vision can be attained by those who are principally moved by truth. Luke says that the event happened after eight days, to represent that such an achievement is the reward of those whose spiritual life is chiefly regulated by love.

There are undoubtedly grave difficulties, profound mysteries, in the Letter of the Word, as in the differences that qualify the Gospels, and particularly in the genealogies, where so much spiritual wisdom is sketched in such summary form. These difficulties are enhanced by the limitations of language to translate spiritual fact into material symbol ; but the more the Letter of the Canonical Word is studied the more evident does it become that that Letter must be preserved for the sake of the indwelling spirit, which, though it may be but dimly discerned, is yet its very life.

C H A P T E R X X I I

1. JOHN. A.D. 80-150.

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I. JOHN. c. A.D. 80-150

THE Apostle John has, by general consent, been associated with the Fourth Gospel as its writer. Very little regarding his life has come down to us. His father was Zebedee, a fisherman of Galilee in comfortable circumstances. His mother was Salome, one of those devoted women who attended on our Lord and ministered to Him of their substance (Mark xv. 40), and his elder brother James was his close companion in discipleship. With Peter the two brothers formed an inner circle in intimate relation with the Lord, and were privileged above the other disciples in being present at some of the most solemn incidents of His ministry. This is because of their representative capacity. Peter, James and John stand for the three principal qualities in the spiritual life, faith, charity and the good of love to the Lord and consequently the good of life.¹

¹ See Ch. xxi., Luke, p. 241.

It is not possible to write a biography of the Apostle for there is no record of his life beyond the references to him in the New Testament. Just as the circumstances of his birth and early life are unrecorded so are those of his later life and death. It is sufficient for the reader to know of his intimacy with the Lord and his zeal in working for His Church. In carrying out this work, and particularly in fostering its development beyond Jerusalem he is supposed to have settled as Bishop at Ephesus, where tradition says he exercised a wide jurisdiction over the Church in Asia, and died after surviving all the Apostles. It is part also of the same tradition that he was induced by the Elders of the Church at Ephesus to commit to writing his account of the Gospel story and Christian philosophy which he had so long taught orally. While the date of his death is uncertain Irenaeus records that he lived till the time of Trajan, who reigned as Emperor from A.D. 98 to 117.

That he was exiled to Patmos is a plausible but unnecessary conjecture based on the statement in Rev. i. 9 :

“I John . . . was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Although the literal form of this verse might suggest the idea of banishment (there are, however, no historical grounds to support it), in the spiritual sense the representative significance of the “isle of Patmos,” “for the Word of God” and “for the testimony of Jesus Christ” gives quite a different view. The presence of John on Patmos appears rather in obedience to a Divine summons, such as the Prophets received, to fulfil a Divine purpose.

There is, moreover, no historical warrant for the tradition of John’s ministry and death in Asia Minor. What is recorded of him in the Word is solely on account

of his representative character. Further biographical details might have built up a more definite personality, but they would not have enhanced the spiritual concept which is imaged forth in the literal narrative. The traditional splendour of episcopal rank is outshone by the simple glory that belongs to him as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

(I) *Writer and Date*

By the year A.D. 170 it was generally believed that the Apostle John was the writer of this Gospel, and this view prevailed until comparatively recent times. Modern Biblical research, however, subjecting to careful scrutiny the evidence afforded by the early Fathers, has come to the conclusion that it is not definitely proved that John wrote the Canonical Gospel. While John's teaching of the Gospel story as he knew it, and his testimony of the life of our Lord as he witnessed it may be incorporated in the Book, yet it is by no means certain that he could have completed the Book in its final form.

There are many writings of the early Fathers which mention the Fourth Gospel, and John as its writer. There are others again which refer to it in such a way as to suggest that it only made its appearance too late for John to have written it.¹ There is, moreover, evidence such as that furnished by Papias, c. A.D. 130 who maintains a silence on the Book, which would indicate that it had not appeared when he wrote. He was Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, and wrote a work called *An Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord*, in which he treats of various traditions concerning the early Fathers. Eusebius in his Church History² refers to what Papias recorded about the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, but

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., for discussion on Johannine Origin.

² See Ch. xxi., p. 223.

makes no mention of a Gospel by John, although Papias, had he known of it, would most probably have included a reference to it in his Exposition, as he was a contemporary for some time, if not actually a hearer, of John.

Internal evidence is no more conclusive than the external in supporting the Johannine tradition. The literal form and philosophical teaching differ much from those of the Synoptics. They relate more of the outer, public, this Gospel more of the inner, private life and teaching of the Lord. They describe in fuller detail the Ministry in Galilee. This Gospel is chiefly concerned with the Ministry in Judea. More than half of John is occupied with transactions that took place in the presence of disciples only, and most of these are of the profoundest nature and deepest importance. John presents the Gospel story more from the inner, moral and spiritual standpoint than from the factual and historical. Further, the Fourth Gospel appears to some to be influenced by Gnosticism, a heresy which during the first three centuries endeavoured to raise the simple faith of the early Christians into a cosmology, a Gnosis or system of esoteric knowledge.

There are two outstanding tenets in Gnosticism. The first is that man's salvation or perfection was to be attained by entering into a higher knowledge of God and the universe rather than by obedience to a practical faith. The second is that the Logos, or Word, was a supernatural agency, inferior to the Supreme God, which manifested itself in the outer world of appearances. The Fourth Gospel is supposed by some to show the influence of this teaching in two of its features. The first is in the anti-millenarianism which is expressed in such sayings as :

“ He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.”—(v. 24.)

This seems to imply that a present internal or spiritual resurrection takes the place of a future external one. The second feature of this Gospel supposed to show Gnostic influence is the Incarnation of the Word, although this goes beyond the Gnostic idea in making God manifest Himself in Jesus. In thus embodying Gnostic doctrine, at least in some degree, it is supposed that the Fourth Gospel shows a philosophical development beyond that attainable by the simple fisher Apostle ; and therefore furnishes its own evidence to a later writer of greater culture.

On the other hand, to others it is an easy task to refute this Gnostic tendency ;¹ but the fact that it can be adduced is significant. The Apostolic origin of the Book is thereby shown to be open to doubt ; and this doubt is increased on literary and linguistic grounds. Modern scholarship seems to trace a predominating Hellenistic tendency that makes it still more difficult to recognize the Book as the writing of a Palestinian Jew.² As there appears to be good ground for supposing that the writer of this Gospel was of a later date than the Apostle, using traditions that were not open to the Synoptists and more philosophical in outlook, the date of the Gospel may be put forward as late as A.D. 150 as being more probable than A.D. 80 the date suggested by the traditional view. The impossibility of assigning a definite date for the writing of the Gospel renders it more and more unlikely that agreement will ever be reached on its writer. Nor is this to be wondered at. As the Book is a part of the Word, the impersonal writer has completed his Divinely directed task by ascribing it to John, a title that characterizes it as the Gospel of Supreme Love.

¹ See John, Cambridge Bible, p. 22.

² See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., on Greek influence ; but see also John, Cambridge Bible, p. 25 ff.

(2) *Contents*

The literal narrative may be conveniently divided into the following sections :

1. i. 1-18 : Introduction ; the Incarnation of the Word.
2. i. 19.-iv. 54 : The Testimony of John the Baptist and the Disciples ; the early works among the Jews, Samaritans and Galileans.
3. v.-xii. : Further Signs and Conflicts with the Jews, culminating in their resolve to put Jesus to death ; the Close of His public Ministry.
4. xiii.-xvii. : Final Discourses and the Priestly Prayer.
5. xviii.-xix. : Trial, Crucifixion and Burial.
6. xx.-xxi. : Resurrection and Manifestations of the Risen Lord.

(3) *The Logos, and Testimony of John the Baptist.* Ch. i.

The distinctive characteristic of this Gospel¹ is intimated in the first verse :

“ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

The fact of the Divinity of the Word from eternity, and of Him who was its Incarnation is thus set forth by John. Language, spoken and written, arose as though by man's invention to give outward expression to the Word. It was natural, therefore, that the vocabulary available at the time when this Gospel was written should furnish a term by which the Word might be made an object of general thought, and more or less understood. The term “ Logos,” by which Gnosticism made familiar

¹ See Bruce, *Commentary on St. John*, for a spiritual Exposition of the Gospel.

the idea of a supernatural creative agency, is used by John to denote the Word, or Wisdom, that essential of Divinity that exists from eternity along with Love, the other Essential, as the only Creator God.

While the Synoptics, particularly Matthew and Luke, present rather the story of the birth and outer life in the world of our Lord as the Messiah, John gives precedence and prominence to the eternal Divinity within the Logos, or Wisdom incarnate in our Lord, who was to emerge absolutely Divine as the Gospel story developed to the Glorification of the Humanity assumed for the purposes of His work in the world.

The first episodic testimony to the Divinity of the Word made flesh appears very early in the Book and is declared by John the Baptist. In his story is graphically depicted the relationship existing between the outer sense of the Letter and the inner sense of the spirit. For by him is represented the written Word, the Scriptures which testify of the Lord Himself, the instrument by which sinners are first called to repentance.

(4) *The First Miracle.* Ch. ii.

It is significant that the first miracle recorded by John, the transforming of water into wine, should have been performed at Cana of Galilee. That province of Canaan remote from Jerusalem represents the spiritual state of those actuated by good, whether they are within the Church, but not of it, and refuse to regard the formality of the Church as sufficient for their spiritual life, or whether they are like the Gentiles, outwith the formal Church and ignorant of the truth because untaught in the Church's doctrine. They are willing to receive the truth that saves and obey it when it is suitably presented to them.

It happened on the third day, for three represents a state of completion. Spiritually the Jewish Church had

reached its end, and the time was ripe for the establishment of a new Church. It is stated that the circumstance that gave rise to the miracle was a marriage. A marriage in the Word represents the heavenly union of good in the heart with the principles of truth in the mind ; but the Church of the Lord should afford its members the spiritual truth of the inner life, the wine of the soul. This wine, however, was lacking in the Jewish Church. Natural truth, the Letter of the Law, there was in plenty. Six water pots of stone filled to the brim were sufficient to prepare the receptive world for the new Church ; but as long as it remained within the formalism of the Jewish Law, and was only a matter of external ritualism, it failed to touch the higher spiritual life with energizing power. It was only as the command " draw out " was obeyed did the water become wine. It is only as natural truth in the Letter is used according to the Divine order does it become spiritual truth to refresh, purify and regenerate the inner life. Even the seemingly trivial and pointless circumstance of the following journey to Capernaum takes its place with all the other details of the story in its coherent sequence. For by going down to Capernaum means the carrying out into the daily life of the Divine principles of goodness and truth which inspire those who have been present at the marriage and have partaken of the wine.

The miracle was not performed only for the handful of wedding-guests almost 2000 years ago. It marked the new spiritual life inaugurated by the establishment of the Christian Church ; but it also has its universal application in the individual soul where the corresponding spiritual conditions are present which render the performance of the miracle a spiritual possibility. Thus the first miracle was more than a mere manifestation of the omnipotent power of Him whom even the forces of nature obey. It represented the presence among men

of One who by His spiritual power was replacing a consummated Church with one more richly endowed with spiritual virtue.

(5) *The Integrity of the Gospel*

One of the aims of Biblical scholarship has been to establish a coherent unity in the Gospel narrative by showing what elements are extraneous and therefore spurious. It should be evident, however, that none of the Gospels, least of all John, can be made to conform to a coherent sequence of literal narrative. There appear disjointed elements which seem to destroy the symmetry of literal composition, and there are presumably discordant features which are apparently best described as interpolations by another hand than the writer of the Book. However, doubts and difficulties concerning what should be regarded as authoritative disappear when unity and coherence are looked for not in the Letter but in the spirit. The Canonical Gospel omits nothing essential to the grand scheme as it is presented under the name of John, and it contains nothing but what contributes its own part to the Divine plan. That it may be shown to include literary elements by more than one hand drawn from more than one source matters nothing to the integrity of the Gospel. Even the much disputed pericope of Ch. vii.-viii.¹ takes its place in the Divine sequence, and the final chapter, xxi., is not an unnecessary appendix. The final form of the Gospel, by whatever means its compilation was effected, establishes its own authority.

When regarded from a spiritual point of view an inevitable unity is seen to link up our Lord's relations with the disciples and people, His discourses and His

¹ See Burgon and Miller, *Causes of Corruption in the Traditional Text*, p. 232; and also Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II, p. 512.

treatment at the hands of the Jewish Church. All the details are parts of an indissoluble whole, comprising His Incarnation, the Redemption of man and the Glorification of His Humanity, with the establishment and early development of a new Church which should render universally available the benefits His Love has provided.

2. REVELATION. c. A.D. 68-130

In the title which heads the Canonical Book, *The Apocalypse, or Revelation, of St. John the Divine*, the epithet Divine is of late origin. It does not appear to have been given to John till the fourth century. It is generally regarded as meaning nothing more than "Reverend," but in view of the representative character of John to whom the writing of the Book is by implication ascribed, the epithet may be indicative of the deep celestial love that belongs to those who can see, or understand, the visions of the Book.

(i) *The Writer, Date and Nature of the Book*

It has been commonly supposed that the writer of the Book was the Apostle John, although the Book itself makes no such claim. Amongst the earliest evidence that attributes the Book to John is that of Justin Martyr, c. A.D. 140. In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, written at Ephesus, he says : "There was with us a man named John, one of the Apostles of Christ," and he quotes as from his Revelations what occurs substantially in Ch. xx¹. This would indicate a general recognition at that time that John was the writer ; and references in the early Fathers tend to show that this belief was widespread from the second century onwards. Irenaeus, c. A.D. 202, is an important witness for the Apostolic origin of the Book,

¹ See *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., Davidson ; and *Bible Readers' Manual*, Plummer.

because of his connection with Polycarp, the disciple of John ; but his evidence is of uncertain value, for he places the writing of the Book at the end of the reign of Domitian, c. A.D. 95. If that date is correct it makes the writer a very old man, whereas the text of Revelation bears the marks in its rugged language and style of a writer whose age had not yet mellowed to that reflected in the writer of the Johannine Gospel.

Doubts as to the Apostolic writer began to appear during the third century, chiefly owing to the critical investigations of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 247, who challenged the Apostolic authenticity of the Book. Thereafter neither external nor internal evidence has settled with any degree of certainty that the Apostle was the writer. Some of the internal evidence that is adduced to support an early date, c. A.D. 68, for the Book, and hence the possibility that John was the writer, is not only arbitrary but fantastic. Such evidence includes the references in Ch. xi. to the Temple still standing, and to the partial destruction of the city, with the references to the series of kings in Ch. xvii. These cannot be regarded as historical, or as having any relation to events upon which a date for the writing of the Book might reasonably be based.

On the other hand some scholars point out elements in the Book which appear conclusive against an early and therefore Apostolic writer. It is suggested for instance that the epistles to the Seven Churches could not have been written till these Churches had been in existence for some time ; and as sectaries had not become prominent till the reign of Trajan, c. A.D. 117, the epistles should be assigned to the reign of Hadrian, c. A.D. 130.¹ While due consideration can be given to evidence of this kind, little can be accorded to suggestions against Apostolic origin which are based on presumed doctrinal

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., p. 212.

teaching derived from a literal interpretation of passages in the Book. When it is urged that an Apostolic writer would not place Jesus on a level with the Supreme God,¹ it is overlooked that the writer is merely recording what he was instructed to write. Argument such as this touches the very core of Biblical structure. It touches not only Apostolic but also Prophetic writing ; for the central fact of all Scripture is the unity of the Godhead in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Modern scholarship has suggested a view of the Book which regards it as of a composite nature.² It supposes the existence, comparatively early, of a Jewish Apocalypse, which was translated from Aramaic into Greek by a Christian writer, who added those portions which some scholars insist belong to a later hand. This would bring the compilation of the whole within the period A.D. 68–130, to the time of Hadrian ; and with the name of John at the beginning to give it Apostolic sanction it found its way into the Canon despite its enigmatic character. According to this view the main part of the Book consists of the Jewish Apocalypse, iv.–xxii., 5, while the Christian portion comprises i.–iii. and xxii., 6, to the end.

It may be admitted that there is a certain satisfaction to be derived from a theory which seems to fit the broad lines of the literal construction of the Book ; but this satisfaction is really very limited when it is realized that the theory brings the reader no nearer the desiderated solution of the two questions : Who wrote the Book ? and What does the Book mean ? It must be obvious that critical research has so far failed to assign the Book definitely to any particular writer, nor has it afforded a means of arriving at a reasonable exposition of its mysteries. Moreover it does not appear likely that any

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Vol. II. p. 187.

² *Ibid.* p. 190.

further advance will be made towards a fuller understanding of the Book as long as its chief interest is supposed to lie in the personality of the writer and in appreciating the historical setting of the narrative. Of the two questions just raised the second, "What does the Book mean?" is the more important. Who the final compiler was, is a matter of little consequence as long as it can be assured that he acted in conformity with the principle of Divine Selection, a principle operative throughout the whole of the Word. The actual date of the compilation is also of little importance. As historical facts these details do not enter into the real plan of the Book, nor would they increase its spiritual value if they were ascertained. The composite nature of the text may be granted as well as the impossibility of identifying the writer. The Apocalyptic language, however, which has been incorporated in the mosaic of the text must be considered as something more than as a cloak to deceive Roman persecutors and to encourage Christians suffering for their faith. The name John, which tradition has handed down as referring to the Apostle, should be considered in its representative sense, denoting those in the Church who combine in their lives the loftiest principles of love and wisdom, while the main purpose of the Book must be looked for in an inner spiritual interpretation.

(2) *Contents*

The literal narrative may be divided into the following sections :

1. i.-iii. : Introduction ; the Vision of the Son of Man ; and the Letters to the Seven Churches.
2. iv.-v. : The Vision of the Throne and of the Lamb.
3. vi.-viii., i : The Vision of the Seven Seals.

4. viii., 2-ix. : The Vision of the Seven Angels with Trumpets.
5. x.-xi. : The Vision of the Book, and the Two Witnesses.
6. xii.-xiii. : The Woman Clothed with the Sun, and Her Enemies.
7. xiv. : The Lamb on Mount Zion, and the Judgment of God.
8. xv.-xvii. : The Seven Angels with the Plagues and Vials of the Wrath of God.
9. xvii.-xviii. : The Fall of Babylon.
10. xix.-xxii. : The Marriage of the Lamb ; Satan Bound ; and The Descent of the New Jerusalem.

(3) *The Plan of the Book*

There is no Book in the Bible which presents greater difficulty to a methodical or logical summary of the text, for there is no Book so apparently lacking in coherence. The wonderful scenes unroll in a pageant of startling imagery, but in language that precludes a literal interpretation. It is only when the Letter is regarded as the means by which the indwelling spirit is objectively presented that the aptness of its correspondential nature becomes evident. It is the language on which the inner spiritual content of the whole Word consistently rests. When, therefore, the interest is diverted from the enigmatic and symbolic imagery of the narrative, the ideal wonder, awe and grandeur portrayed in the Letter are transferred to the real world of the spirit. The materially unrealized and unrealizable hopes and aspirations of Apocalypse, and the visions of Prophecy become realized and eternally realizable in the spiritual experience of mankind. The Book must remain an enigma as long as a solution is sought in a literal interpretation of its text which the very naivety of its details, as trumpets,

seals, beasts, numbers, proclaims to be parabolic. It should be noted that in the original no title is given the Book, which begins with the words :

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him.”

Thus the first verse announces as its main subject the Revelation, or Appearing, of the Lord at His Second Coming. It is said to be given Him by God. This does not imply that God and Jesus are two separate Persons. It does imply that Jesus, who is the incarnate eternal Word, or Divine Wisdom, is the Immediate Author of Revelation, while the moving Cause, acting by means of the Word, is the Divine Love, or the Father. This is taught by the Lord Himself in the Gospel of Love: “I can of mine own Self do nothing ; as I hear, I judge.” John v. 30 ; “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself ; but the Father, that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.” John xiv. 10.

In the spiritual sense the general plan of the Book becomes immediately evident. What may be termed the Jewish Apocalypse combines with the Christian prophetic element to form a grand dramatic presentation of spiritual developments. These culminate in the consummation of the first Christian Church, the Second Coming of the Lord, and the establishment of the New Christian Church, the Crown of all the Churches, represented by the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. While the Apocalyptic element may appear in the Letter to be more or less distinct it is not possible to regard it as separate from the Christian. It has furnished its own part in the literal groundwork of the narrative ; but the Jewish and the Christian elements have been so interwoven in the whole that the spiritual sequence of the inner content is continuous and unbroken.

(4) *The Epistles to the Seven Churches.*
Ch. ii.-iii.

After an introduction in which the Lord's Second Coming in the clouds of the Letter is announced, and in which He is revealed in His glory as the Divine Love and Wisdom in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks with seven stars in His right hand, the Church is described not only in its present state but also in that state of consummation to which it was tending. The seven stars in His right hand are all the knowledge of spiritual things which He gives to enlighten His Church as the stars illumine the Heavens. The seven golden candlesticks are all the principles of goodness and truth in the natural mind, or the Church as to these principles, which are cold and lifeless till infilled with the warmth of love and the light of truth from Him. The number seven here as everywhere in the Word indicates the state of completeness and perfection in what is numbered.

The epistles are addressed to the seven Churches in Asia. The Asia in which the Churches mentioned are situated was the westernmost province of Asia Minor, a very small corner of the world. The name, however, has a much wider application. It stands for the greater Asia of the East, the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of Churches, the quarter of the rising sun. Asia is here used in its spiritual signification as the light of truth from the Word. So that the Seven Churches in Asia represent all classes of Christians wherever they are to be found who profess their belief in the Word of God. The epistles are thus a message not merely to a few communities of early Christians who no doubt found them salutary. They are addressed to all members of the Lord's Church, who are spiritually denoted by the seven cities, and they describe their interior state. They

are all those who are in any degree capable of acknowledging the Lord in His Second Advent, and of entering the New Church to be then established by Him. Their faults are exposed, their virtues are recognized. They are warned and encouraged. Continuance in sin is threatened with punishment, while turning to righteousness has the promise of reward. The epistles are a monitory prelude, announcing in no uncertain voice the existence of spiritual evils which would surely lead to that spiritual decadence which the later prophecies of the Book depict.

(5) *The Book Sealed with the Seven Seals.*

Ch. v.-viii., I

The state of spiritual darkness and unbelief which marked the consummation of the First Christian Church is here prophetically portrayed in the vision of the sealed Book. The Book is seen in the right hand of the Lord as He appeared to John when his spiritual perception was opened. The circumstances attending the vision, and forming part of it, emphasize the paramount importance of the Book. He who holds it in His right hand rules over the Heavens, and is the centre from whom are derived the heavenly principles of Love and Wisdom; and He is the object of worship of all those in whom these principles are embodied. This is described in parable by the four beasts, or living things, which are the Divine principles of goodness, innocence, wisdom and intelligence; and the four and twenty elders that fall down before the Lamb.

The Book was in the form of a roll, or volume, written both on the inner and outer sides : but it was sealed with seven seals. Thus is pictured in prophecy what was realized in history, the state of the Word in the Christian Church. The Word with its inner sense or spirit and its outer sense or Letter was a closed Book to the Church,

completely closed, and no human intelligence could open it. Only the Omnipotence of Divine Love, the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, and the Omniscience of the Divine Wisdom, the Root of David, could open the seals. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb or the Humanity made Divine, alone can reach down to reveal the nature of the Book, so long lost. He alone can open the seals, disclosing the real nature of the Church's life and doctrine in the light of what is written on the inner side of the Book.

The main purpose of the Revelation is to treat of the consummation of the First Christian Church; but in certain places, where the historical sequence is more or less evident, as in this vision, it describes in brief outline various phases in its decline. Here is included in dramatic sequence successive stages through which the Church passed in its waning regard for the Word. For the opening of the seals is not so much to disclose what the Book contains as to reveal by its light the states of the Church universal as well as individual. The opening of the first four seals was accompanied by the appearance of four horses, white, red, black and pale in colour, with riders of appropriate character. The horse, of course, is here used correspondentially, and represents something in the economy of the spiritual world which performs the function of the horse in the world of nature. This is the understanding, by which the mind is borne over the boundless fields, soaring heights and difficult pathways of the intellect as the horse bears its rider over the open spaces and rising ground that must be traversed before the goal is reached.

It is with this significance that the ancient writers of mythology, the last relics of the literature of primal man, regarded the horse. Thus Pegasus, the winged horse of antiquity, was the symbol of truth or intelligence; for with a blow of his hoof he caused the fountain of the

Muses to spring from Mt. Helicon. The wooden horse of Troy is another instance of the symbolic use of this animal, representing the intelligence or craft, by which the Greeks achieved the destruction of "the topless towers of Ilium."

As the horse corresponds to the understanding the horses which appeared when the seals were opened denote the understanding of the Word at successive periods in the spiritual development of the Church, historically in the first reference but universally in the individual. The first horse was white, corresponding to the clear understanding of Divine Truth which the Apostles and early Christians enjoyed. Its rider, or lover of truth, had in his hand a bow, to indicate the strong serviceable doctrine that they possessed, as the arrows were the well-tempered truths with which they conquered the errors and falsities opposing the growth of the Christian Church.

This is also the significance of the white horse that appeared in a later version (Ch. xix.). Upon it sat the Son of Man, as the Word of God, followed by the hosts of heaven also riding upon white horses. This pictures the resurgence of a clear understanding of the Word in its purity, after the tribulations of the first Christian Church were over ; so that those whose understandings are enlightened and whose character is heavenly follow the precepts and example of the Lord.

The second horse that appeared marked the beginning of the Church's decline. The colour red denotes love, but here it denotes the evil that was countenanced by the Church's depraved understanding of the Word. Not long after the Apostles' time, ambition entered the Church as its leaders succumbed to the prospect of high position and the opportunities of self-aggrandisement that opened up to them. The spirit of charity waned. The sword of falsity and credal dissension banished peace from the Church,

and the cruelties of exile, excommunication and even death were inflicted professedly in the cause of religion. This first stage in the decadence of the Church, its departure from love and charity, is followed by its departure from truth and faith.

The red horse is followed by the black. The red horse denotes that the Church has lost its understanding of what the Word teaches as to good : the black shows it lost its understanding with regard to the truth it teaches. The Middle Ages were from the intellectual point of view the Dark Ages. The balances that the red horse's rider held in his hand denote the judgment that men exercised in their appreciation of the Word. The low esteem in which it was held is expressed by the small value they placed on its teaching. A measure of wheat, that is the whole of its teaching as to good, for a penny ; and three measures of barley, that is all its teaching as to truth, for a penny. While the Word itself was held in respect, even in superstitious reverence, the understanding of it was dark indeed. And the understanding was of the Letter only : the spirit was beyond their judgment. The oil and the wine, the good and the truth of the spiritual content they could not hurt.

The pale horse with its rider which appeared on the opening of the fourth seal is representative of the state of the Church when it has lost completely all understanding of the good and the truth of the Word, the state of spiritual death, which results in the state called hell. This latter is the state of those in active hostility to the Divine rule, who seek to destroy men's souls by the sword, or falsity ; by hunger, or the deprivation of heavenly knowledge ; by death, or the extinction of charity and faith ; and by the beasts of the earth, or the lusts of the flesh which are the perverted affections of the natural man.

In this state of general desolation existing in the

Church which John foresaw, there are those who retain their religious principles and remain in holiness to the Lord, in spite of the extremity of spiritual tribulation which they suffer. Their existence is disclosed at the opening of the fifth seal. They are "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God" yet preserved under the safety and sanctity of the altar till the consummation of the Old Church should be completed and the New Church should be established.

This consummation is graphically pictured at the opening of the sixth seal in substantially the same terms as the description of this event given by our Lord to His disciples, when they inquired what should be the sign of His Second Coming (Matt. xxiv.).¹ The opening of the seals is now delayed and opportunity is taken to describe how vast, even limitless, is the provision made by the Divine Providence for the reception of those who are worthy to enter His New Church. The great number within the Church itself, sealed or marked as the servants of God, are represented by the one hundred and forty four thousand from the twelve Tribes of Israel. The twelve Tribes represent all the principles of goodness and truth that constitute the Church—which has in reality only two principles, love to the Lord and charity to the neighbour, with the wisdom that carries these into the life. The number twelve represents the infinite variety of degrees in which these principles are received and practised by those who are within the Church. The twelve thousand from each Tribe, irrespective of the size of the Tribe, denote all those without limitation, for the numbers employed are not arithmetical but representative, who follow these principles in the religious life rather than the example of their leaders in the decadent formal Church.

It will be observed that the twelve Tribes of the

¹ See Ch. xx., p. 218.

Revelation are different from the twelve Tribes of the Old Testament. The Tribes themselves are different and the order in which they are named is different. The differences depend upon the prevailing principle that underlies the spiritual circumstances in which they appear, not on the personal whim of the writer of the narrative.¹ In the Revelation story the Church as to love is the main reference, so Judah, the Tribe that represents love, is mentioned first. Dan is omitted, for that Tribe, which was in the remote North of Canaan, represents truth in its lowest form. This form, as the Letter of the Word, readily becomes perverted to falsity, even although this may be done through ignorance and with good intent. Nevertheless, it has an evil effect on the understanding of truth, as may be seen from Jacob's prophecy concerning Dan in his last words to his sons, when he calls Dan a serpent, biting the horse heels (Gen. xlix. 17). The worthy members of this Tribe merge, as it were, into the company of the neighbouring Gentiles, who represent those outside the Church yet who live a good life notwithstanding their ignorance of the truth. They thus become part of the multitude whom no man could number, who joined in the worship of the Lamb.

On the opening of the seventh seal it is said there was "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." This is to indicate the astonishment aroused in those spiritually able to perceive it by the state prophetically described to which the Church was to descend. This is the state to be reached when the understanding of the Word is so completely lost that its teaching is destroyed, or worse still is perverted to support the dogmas which even yet hang so heavily on the Christian world, dogmas which when followed must result in the destruction of all spiritual life.

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., p. 221.

(6) *The Seventh Seal and the Two Witnesses.*
Ch. viii.-xi.

The seals closing the Book that are described as being opened by the Lord are, after the first, the seals which the Church itself placed upon it. The seventh represents the last fatal error that blinds men's understanding of the sacred Book. It followed hard upon the disastrous falsity that good works in the name of religion are all-sufficient for salvation, the falsity of that phase of the Church's life when the pomp and circumstance of external ecclesiasticism sears the inner spiritual life. The final error that placed the seventh seal on the Book is the direct counterpart of this, namely, that good works avail nothing, but only faith in dogma, framed, however, in ignorance and fashioned in bigotry. When the seventh seal was opened the evils which this falsity brings upon the Church are disclosed on the sounding of trumpets, by which is represented the revealing voice of Divine Truth.

The sounding of the seventh trumpet, however, proclaims the Second Coming of the Lord and the acknowledgment of His sovereignty by His New Church. This takes place when the period of labour and tribulation is over and when the two witnesses, slain in the streets of Jerusalem, in the very heart of the Church, again stand upon their feet, brought to life by the spirit of God. These two witnesses are the two great truths of the Christian faith: that Jesus of the New Testament is Jehovah of the Old, and that the condition of entering into life is the keeping of the Commandments. The translation of these truths into practice is the fulfilling of the two great Commandments: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Matt. xxii. 37-39). This organic connection between these truths is indicated by their being called

the two olive trees, Rev. xi. 4, under which figure the idea of perfect love was also represented to Zech. iv. 11, 14.

- (7) *The Woman Clothed with the Sun ; and Her Enemies :*
(a) *The Beast and His Number.* Ch. xii.-xiii.
(b) *The Woman Arrayed in Purple and Scarlet.*
Ch. xvii.

The difficulties attending the establishment of the Lord's New Church are now pictured in the wonderful vision that was presented to the spiritual sight of John. The Woman is the Church, the sun which surrounds her is the Divine Love, and the moon on which her feet rest is an enlightened faith. The twelve stars forming a crown upon her head represent all the knowledge of Divine things from which she derives the wisdom that is her guiding intellectual glory. The child she brings forth is the new system of doctrine and order of society, exhibiting all the Divine principles of goodness and truth which are the very essence of her own being and which it is her mission to dispense to the world.

(a) *The Beast and His Number.* Ch. xii.-xiii.

The enemies of the Church whose hostility is mainly directed against her teaching as to truth are depicted as a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon its heads. The dragon, or serpent, represents the sensual nature of man with the love of self as its ruling principle ; and the colour red is indicative of its evil character. The heads, the horns and the crowns which are said to belong to the dragon represent the intelligence, the power and the wisdom that the spirit of self-love has acquired and perverted to its own evil ends, in the course of the ages from the early Garden of Eden state of mankind to the state of spiritual decadence reached, for instance, in the eighteenth century, when the triumph of Reason was openly acknowledged.

The number seven, which in a good sense represents the spirit of holiness that blesses a good work well done, here denotes the complete spiritual decadence which results from the long continued ignoble use of intelligence and wisdom ; while ten denotes the terrible destructiveness of the power wielded by the dragon. As an example of the destruction wrought by it, it is said that its tail drew down the third part of the stars of heaven. By the tail is represented the truth of the Word in its lowest and most apparent form in the Letter ; but here it denotes this truth falsified, and by such falsity are destroyed all the spiritual truths which the Word contains.

Such is the opposition that the New Church as to her teaching has to meet : but help comes from an unexpected quarter. The earth is said to have helped the Woman. By the earth is meant all those in the Church who are naturally good, and who while ignorant of the truth are yet affirmative to its acceptance. These swallow up, or neutralize the flood of falsity the dragon pours forth.

While the intellectual falsity represented by the dragon may be summarized under the doctrine of salvation by faith alone when taught and lived in all its starkness, phases of its teaching are denoted by the appearance of other two beasts, the second of which caused its mark to be impressed on all its followers. All attempts at a historical interpretation of this beast may be dismissed as fruitless.¹ The mark, the name and the number of the beast are variations of the same thing, namely, the quality, or character, which is attached to those who are devotees of the beast. One feature of that character is specifically mentioned. No man without the mark might buy or sell. It should be obvious that the plane of consideration of this, as of all the Book, is spiritual ; and by this

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., p. 222.

restriction, expressed in the language of literal trading, is to be understood the intolerance of the dogma ; for buying and selling represent learning and teaching the spiritual possessions of the Church.

The real nature of the dogma is set forth when it is declared that its number is the number of a man. By a man in a good sense is represented truth, understanding, wisdom ; but as the doctrine of faith without charity is so demonstrably irrational, man is here evidently used in its opposite sense. The quality of the dogma is, therefore, declared to be not wisdom but folly. This is emphasized by the statement that its number is 666, which of course has no arithmetical significance. For the number six denotes all the truths of the Church with their corresponding good ; but in this case their opposites are implied, namely all falsity and evil. The triplication of the number merely extends and intensifies this significance ; so that the number of the beast being 666 means that the dogma is characterized by the complete profanation of everything true and consequently good that the First Christian Church was founded to preserve.

(b) The Woman Arrayed in Purple and Scarlet.
Ch. xvii.

As a companion picture to the great red dragon John beheld in the wilderness the vision of the Woman, arrayed in purple and scarlet, riding upon a beast with seven heads and ten horns. Thus are pictured the enemies of the New Church who are ruled by the lust of dominion, temporal and spiritual, and who from love of self profane the holiest principle of religion, love to the Lord. These, first called Babel and later Babylon, profess an external formal religion, overloaded with the brilliant trappings of elaborate ritual. This is represented by the gorgeous raiment of purple and scarlet, the pretentious but hypocritical garments that conceal the evil and falsity

beneath: they are outward ceremonials covering an inner reality of moral depravity.

The Woman was seen in the wilderness, a figure of the state of spiritual desolation the Old Church has reached, lacking all the principles of true religion. The beast upon which she rode is the Word of God. It is said to be full of all manner of blasphemies, for it is as a blasphemer that she uses the Word. The holy truths she has profaned are its seven heads, and the ten horns are the power inherent in the truth, which the evil as well as the good can exercise. In the cryptic language of the Letter the Word WAS: it suffered eclipse and oblivion, but it was restored. It IS NOT: it remains in superstitious reverence in the decadent Church, but the Church knows it not. It YET IS: despite the contumely with which it has been treated it still is the most widely published Book, and the most potent literary, moral and spiritual influence, in the world; and by its power the Seer is assured the gorgeously arrayed Woman shall be destroyed.

(8) *The Judgment, the Word the Touchstone
of Character.* Ch. xx.

The majesty and power of the Word having been vindicated against the pernicious dogmas which have been framed by falsifying its truth, John now describes an inevitable purpose to which it is applied, namely the Judgment. When all are judged the books they have written during their lifetime—their minds upon which all thoughts and actions are recorded—are opened, and their true characters are revealed in the light of the open Book of Life, the Word of God. Those whose names are written in this Book, that is, those whose characters are in accord with the principles of goodness and truth in the Word, are judged to life. This is far from being a plea for sectarianism that would reserve salvation only

for those so circumstanced as to possess the Bible. Principles of truth and righteousness are fundamental to the heart of humanity ; and although these find their fullest and highest expression in the Word preserved in the Bible of Christendom they are still operative in other hearts and minds through other Divine sources of appeal. By the Book of Life must be understood the touchstone of Divine Truth that can be applied to the highest human comprehension ; for Christians who know and understand the Word form but a small proportion of mankind. As the Word, however, like Jacob's ladder, stretches from earth to heaven, the future life is a time of opportunity for those of goodwill to advance in grace with advancement in knowledge and understanding of the Word. By life to which the good are judged is meant spiritual life as opposed to the life of the carnal mind, which in the next world as in this never aspires to the higher things of the spirit.

Having thus distinguished those who are worthy to enter into life John describes the final vision, the glorious City which now opens wide its gates to welcome into the New Jerusalem all who do the Commandments of God.

(9) *The Descent of the New Jerusalem.*

Ch. xxi.-xxii.

In the Epistles there are striking indications that a spiritual rather than a literal interpretation must be placed upon the Word. In 2 Peter iii. 10-13, the Apostle says :

" But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. . . . Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

In this passage ¹ the writer does not express the hope of the immediate return of the Lord, with the destruction of the heaven and earth of nature, which some of the materially minded disciples, imbued with the idea of an earthly millenium, may have entertained. He looks forward with the eye of faith to the institution of a new order of society—a New Church, when the spiritual principles of righteousness constituting its inner being (heaven) will be expressed with perfect correspondence in an outer life regulated by a new system of truth and equity (earth). The materialistic idea of a Second Personal Coming of the Lord, when the universe of heaven and earth would be destroyed, which was associated with the destruction of Jerusalem, was shattered for many when no such events followed the fall of Jerusalem. The writer of the Epistle, therefore, taught the early Christians to look for something other than material wonders; and what he saw with the eye of faith the writer of Revelation sees realized with the spiritual eye of prophecy:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:
for the first heaven and the first earth were passed
away.”—Rev. xxi. 1.

The first Christian Church which had just been founded and which was being spread with so much trial and suffering has, in prophecy, passed away. And this Book has just pictured prophetically the cause and nature of its passing. The New Church that succeeds it is now ecstatically described by John as the Lamb’s Wife with reference to the principles of love, which are all directed to the Lord, and as The City, New Jerusalem, with reference to the principles of truth or the doctrine in which the Divine Love and Wisdom find expression and ultimate form in the world.

The City is seen to come down from God out of heaven,

¹ See Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II., p. 543.

for the life which keeps its principles alive is the Divine Life consciously inflowing from above. It is protected by a wall—the literal truths of the Word which combine to form a strong bulwark against the attacks of evil and falsity. The wall is of jasper, clear as crystal, for the truths of the Word are seen to have the transparency of the jasper stone when the inward light of the spiritual sense shines through them. The twelve gates are all the knowledges of truth that serve to introduce the spiritual traveller into the City, as by natural knowledge the student enters into the science of his choice. These are inscribed with the names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, for as by Israel in the Old Testament is represented the Church so the twelve Tribes denote all the principles of goodness and truth that constitute the Church, as they are presented in the Word of the Old Testament. Those enter by the various gates whose hearts and minds are impressed with the qualities represented by the gates. There are three gates on each side to indicate the universality of appeal the principles of the Church exercise. The number three indicates the perfect sufficiency of the truths to satisfy all the demands both of the heart and of the intellect. Those who desire to enter the Church because love impels them approach it from the East and West, while those with whom the intellectual appeal is stronger approach it from the South and North. It is, however, most significantly declared that every gate is of one pearl. The most precious truth, the pearl of great price, by which everyone enters the Church is the central truth of Christianity, the knowledge of Jesus as the only God.

In the twelve foundations of the wall are inscribed the names of the twelve Apostles.¹ By these are also

¹ For detailed spiritual signification of these and the precious stones with which they are associated, see *Commentary on Revelation*, p. 401, Bruce.

meant all the principles that constitute the Church, for while the principles of the Church of the Old Testament are distinguished from those of the Christian Church they differ only in the form in which they are presented: they are the same in essential character. They are introductory to the Christian, and in the Christian form of the principles they find their fulfilment.

The City lies four-square, the length, and the breadth and the height are equal. When spiritually considered the ideas of space and distance disappear. The idea of quality takes their place. By length is denoted that quality which belongs to the heart or will, by breadth the quality of truth or understanding, and by height the holiness that arises from their perfect harmony in the life. These qualities are equal in the New Church. The City, moreover, is of pure gold, a fitting representative of a Church whose very fabric is love and the essence of whose doctrinal teaching is also love.

The Book, and with it the Word—the Divine Truth—which man may not alter, concludes with a description of life in the New Jerusalem. As this is possible when the Lord has made His Second Coming, it is not intended to be deferred to some indefinite time in the future. The Lord has come in the clouds of the Letter by revealing Himself—the Divine Truth—in the internal sense. Life in the Golden City is as certain of attainment now as ever it will be; for wherever the City of Vision is permitted to descend into the hearts and minds of men, the Church on earth is at one with the Church in heaven. Jerusalem is being built anew on the spiritual foundations of the Divine Love and Wisdom.

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INDEX AND CORRESPONDENCES WITH NOTES

For the sign = read "corresponds to"

CORRESPONDENCE is based on function. As all Creation proceeds from the Divine Creator everything therein has relation to one of the two constituent Divine principles, Love and Wisdom, and expresses, according to its function, some aspect of the Divine Goodness or of the Divine Truth. Every object, activity and state in the natural world, therefore, corresponds to something spiritual. It, therefore, signifies something of the Divine, or something good or true; unless, owing to the misuse of man's freedom, it has been perverted, and then it represents something evil or false. (See Chapter ix.)

Many Correspondences at first sight may appear arbitrary. This appearance will be corrected if they are considered not only in their own context but also in conjunction with other passages of which they form part.

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- Arrow=truth.
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Jehoahaz, 138.
Jehoash, 140.
Jehoiachin=those who outwardly respect the Word, but who profane it by failing to observe its laws, 43, 138, 141, 173, 177.
Jehoiakim=those who are guilty of profanation by perverting the Church, acting according to falsity, 173, 174, 188, 216.
Jehoram, 138, 140.
Jehoshaphat, 140.
Jehovah—Jesus, 264.
Jeremiah, 47, 149.
the Book, 169, 176, 178, 195, 216.
Jeroboam, 139, 144.
Jerome, 24, 36, 40.
Jerusalem the Church in the affection of good.
Jesus, 253, 256, 264, 271.
Jewish Church, 133, 135, 155, 156, 157, 159, 161, 170, 171, 174, 176, 184, 191, 229, 248.
Job, 37, 180, 205.
Joel, 192, 194.
Johannine origin, 244, 245, 251.
John=the good of love to the Lord, and consequent good of life, 203, 208.
(Mark, 222), 240.
the Gospel, 242.
Jonadab, 173.
Jonah, 192, 194.

Jordan=introductory truth, 122.
 Joseph=the Lord as to the Divine principle; the spiritual kingdom; the doctrine of good and truth therein, 112, 113, 114, 115, 144.
 Josephus, 38.
 Joshua=truth, 44, 46.
 the Book, 122.
 Josiah, 46, 169.
 Jotham, 152.
 Judah=love; the Lord as to celestial love, 145, 194, 245.
 Judges, 44, 126.
 Judgment, 154, 155, 164, 187, 268.
 Justin Martyr, c.A.D. 100-148,
 wrote apology for Christians.
 In his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, which Eusebius says he wrote at Ephesus, he maintains the claims of Christianity against Judaism, 251.

K

Katechein (Greek), 16.
 Kelvin, 54.
 Kethubim, 39, 186.
 King=truth, a ruling principle.
 Kings, the Book, 47, 138.
 Kingdom of God, 170.

L

Lamb=innocence; the Lord as to His Divine Humanity 259, 263, 270.
 Lamentations, the Book, 176.
 Last Supper, 220.
 Law of Holiness, 48.
 Lead=evil; sensual truth.
 Lebanon=the Church as to perceptions of truth from the rational man; spiritual good.
 Cedar of Leb.=knowledge of truth.
 Lectionaries, 231.
 Lefevre (Stapulensis), 25.
 Length=quality as to good, 272.
 Lentils=humble species of good.
 Levi=truth in act, the good of life; the affection of good and truth, charity, 214.
 Leviticus, 118.
 Limitations, 147, 241.

Linen=truth from good, Divine Truth.
 Lion=truth in power, 259.
 Literalists, 238.
 Loaf=good.
 Logos, 245, 247.
 Loins=love.
 Lollards, 24.
 London, 29.
 Luke=intelligence, the Gospel in which intelligence is subordinate to love, 210.
 the Gospel, 234.
 Lust, 154, 168, 176.
 Luther, 25, 26.
 Lyons, 206.

M

Maacah, 139.
 Maccabees, 33, 37, 41, 201.
 Maclagan, *The Two Books of Kings Explained*, 147, 158, 176.
 Magog=those in external worship.
 Malachi, 192, 195, 228.
 Man=intelligence and wisdom from the Word; the Church in man, 267.
 Manasseh=the will, good, 113, 144, 152.
 Manasses (prayer), 33.
 Mansions=degrees of spiritual life, 151.
 Many, predicated of truth.
 Marburg, 25.
 Marcion, c. A.D. 120-170, a heretic of the second century. Drew up a Canon of sacred Scripture, Pauline in character, which should exclude all Jewish influence. His Canon included only ten Epistles of Paul and a Gospel supposed to have been Luke's but altered to suit his own views, called by his followers the Gospel of Christ, 236.
 Mark (means Hammer)=truth of faith in ultimates, 34, 210.
 the Book, 222, 225, 236.
 Mark, name, number=quality, 266.
 Marriage=union of good and truth, 249.

- Massorah, collection of commentaries and illustrative matter relating to the text of the Hebrew Scriptures, compiled in the tenth and preceding centuries.
- Massoretic, 171.
- Materialistic, 270.
- Matrix, 5.
- Matthew, 208.
the Book, 210, 236.
- Matthew, Thomas, 27.
- Measure, to = to know and explore quality, 183.
- Measures = states as to truth.
- Medes, 163, 164, 165.
- Melchizedek = the Divine Humanity as to good and truth; the celestial things of the interior man with the Lord, 105.
- Memory, 174.
- Messiah, 95, 161, 165, 191, 202, 225, 248, 253.
- Micah, 192, 194.
- Michael = genuine truth from the Word, 191.
- Michael Angelo, 54.
- Middle Ages, 261.
- Midland Dialect, 24.
- Millenium, 245, 270.
- Millet = humble species of good.
- Miracle, 204, 231, 248.
- Mizpeh, 130.
- Moab, -ite = one who profanes the good of the Church, 154, 156, 175.
- Modern Research, 158, 163, 167, 199, 253.
- Monarchy = the rule of truth, 130, 132, 136, 143.
- Month = state as to truth.
- Moon = faith; spiritual good, charity, 219, 265.
- More, Thomas, 26.
- Mosaic, 254.
- Moses = the Law, truth, 38, 149.
- Most Ancient Church, 84, 142.
- Mountain = the celestial principle, love, 189.
- Muratorian Fragment, c. A.D. 170, contains the first list of Books received in the Church, and includes practically all those in our New Testament, 235.
- Mystic, 205.
- Mystery, 241, 253.
- Mythology, 20, 71.
- N
- Nabonidus, 186.
- Nahum, 192, 194.
- Name = quality, 94, 266.
- Name-words, 22, 70.
- Naphtali = the power of the Lord's Divine Human; temptation and victory; resistance on part of the natural man.
- Nathan = the doctrine of truth, 134, 135.
- Nation = the spiritual Church receiving the good of faith, 175, 185.
- nations from afar = the falsity of evil, of the sensual man.
- Nazarite = the celestial man; the Lord as to the literal sense of the Word.
- Nebiim, 39.
- Nebuchadnezzar = the profane principle which destroys the Church, 169, 177, 185, 186, 188, 189.
- Nebuchadrezzar, 186.
- Nehemiah, 38, 43.
- Net = doctrine; knowledge of truth; faculty of knowing, understanding.
- New Church, 218, 219, 249, 258, 266, 272.
- New Testament, 41, 202.
- Nicene Creed, formulated at the Council of Nicaea, summoned by Constantine, A.D. 325 to settle the Arian controversy. See Arius and Swedenborg. *The True Christian Religion*, No. 94.
- Nicholas de Hereford, 23.
- Night = state of evil or obscurity.
- Noah = the Ancient or Noatic Church, 97, 98, 142, 180, 240.
- Noble, *Plenary Inspiration*, 208.
- North = obscurity as to truth; faith separated from charity, 207, 225, 271.
- Northern Kingdom, 139, 143, 160, 166.
- Nucleus, 168.

Numbers, the Book, 118.
 Numbers=qualities, 117, 229, 266.
Nunc licet; now it is permitted (to enter intelligently into the things of faith). See Swedenborg, *The True Christian Religion*, No. 508; 18.

O

Obadiah, 192, 194.
Oil=spiritual good.
Old Church, 268.
Olive=love.
 Olive tree=perception of celestial good and truth, 265.
Omniscience, 219.
One=what is complete as to good.
Order of the Gospels, 208.
Origen, 40.
Origins (of Mark), 224.
Ox=natural good.
Oxford, 29.

P

Palaeontology, 8.
Palestine, 16, 154.
Palimpsest, 35.
Pamphilus, 32.
Papias, 210, 223, 244, 245.
Parable, 66, 170, 213, 256.
Paradise, 183.
Parallel, 158, 166, 202.
Parallelism, 48, 90.
Pardon, 177.
Parker, Archbishop, 28.
Pastor=one who teaches truth and leads to good of life, 173.
Patmos=state suitable for illumination in spiritual things, 243.
Paul, 16.
 Epistles of, 58, 204, 205, 222, 234, 235, 236.
Pearl=truth, 271.
Penman, 166, 178.
Pentateuch, 25, 44, 46, 51, 52, 122.
Pentecost, 14, 168.
Perception, 11, 12, 81, 99, 258.
Perga, 222.
Pericope, 250.
Persecution, 185.

Persians, 164.
Person=a constituent or representative principle.
Personal, 158.
Personality, 199, 207, 238, 254.
Pervert, 158, 170.
Peter=truth, faith, 203, 208, 223, 240, 241.
Phelps, Vivian, *The Churches and Modern Thought*, 3.
Philippi, 234.
Philistines=those who place salvation in faith alone, 154, 175.
Pison=the will, love, 92.
Plain=good and truth in the natural man; the ultimates of the Word as to doctrine; the literal sense of the Word.
Plagues=evils and falsities, 118.
Plato, *Republic*, 69, 209.
Plummer, *Bible Readers' Manual*, 251.
Polycarp, 206, 252.
Polytheism, 71.
Possessions=spiritual riches, 267.
Post-exilic, 164, 196.
Pot=doctrine, containing good and truth, 181.
Pottage=collection of doctrine.
Potter's work=reformation, regeneration, 171.
Potter's vessel=self-derived intelligence, 171.
Preaching, 237.
Priesthood=those who teach truth and lead to good, or opposite, 172.
Priests' Code, 47.
Prince=principal or leading truth.
Princess=principal or leading good.
Profanation, profane, 154, 158, 160, 161, 162, 170, 172, 173, 179, 194, 200, 216, 267.
Prophecy, 150, 170, 255.
Prophet=the Prophetic Word, doctrine of truth, 150, 190.
Prophetic literature, 149, 193, 253.
Prophetic schools, 139.
Prophets, Major, Minor, 149, 193.
Psalms, 196.
Psalteries=spiritual good and truth.
Publicans, 213.

Pulse, grain=good of doctrine.
 Purple=quality of good or evil,
 265.
 Purvey, John, 24.

Q

Quarters; East and West=those
 in good of love
 North and South=those in
 truths of wisdom, 207.

R

Rain=blessing, peace after
 temptation.
 inundating rain=destruction of
 truth.
 spiritual truth; as snow=
 natural truth in the memory,
 but becomes spiritual by
 love, as snow becomes rain
 water by heat.
 Rainbow, see Bow.
 Ram=the good of charity and
 the faith thence derived, 190.
 Rational principle, reason, 145,
 155, 160, 165, 174, 265.
 Rechabites, sons of Jonadab=
 those of the celestial Church,
 principled in good, 173.
 Recreat, 170.
 Redemption, 125, 147, 152, 161,
 162, 195, 202, 239, 251.
 Reformation, 153.
 Reformers, 24, 27, 41.
 Regeneration, 82, 98, 136, 146,
 201, 202, 239, 249.
 Remnant=those in whom some
 good and truth remain, 152,
 156, 159, 168, 172, 174.
 Renaissance, 24.
 Rendell, *Peculiarities of the Bible*,
 159, 191, 217.
 Repentance, repentant, 153, 159,
 161, 171, 230.
 Representation, 127, 136, 137,
 182, 183, 242, 243, 244, 251.
 Representative, of a Church, 148,
 159.
 Restoration, 151, 168, 178.
 Resurrection, 146, 227, 246.
 Retrogression, 159.
 Reuben=wisdom originating in
 celestial love, 45.

Revelation, 20, 150, 205.
 the Book, 251.
 Revised Version, 30, 34.
 Revolt of the Tribes, 141, 144.
 Riches=truths acquired by an
 external way.
 Ring=conjunction of good and
 truth.
 Ritual, -ism, 249, 267.
 Roll, a volume=the Word, 258.
 Rome, 111, 222, 235, 236.
 Ruth, 43.

S

Saint Catherine, 33.
 Salome, 242.
 Salvation, 154, 156, 157, 159, 161,
 162, 165, 175, 266.
 Samaria=the Church in the
 affection of truth, 181.
 Samaritan Scriptures, 44.
 Samuel, the Book, 128.
 Sapphire=spiritual good; the
 external of the celestial king-
 dom.
 quality of the literal sense when
 the internal sense is seen
 therein.
 Sarah=truth united to good, 108.
 Saul, king=literal truth, 130, 132,
 134.
 Sayings of Jesus, 205, 210, 223,
 244.
 Scarlet=quality of truth, or
 falsity, 265.
 Scientific principle, 155, 175.
 Sea=external, natural, worldly
 knowledge.
 Seal, a fastening=what renders
 the Word a closed Book, 258-
 264.
 Seal, a brand or mark=an in-
 dication of state or quality,
 256, 262.
 Second Coming, 217, 218, 219,
 256, 258, 262, 264, 270, 272.
 Sectarianism, Sectaries, 252, 268.
 Seir=union of faith and charity
 in the natural man.
 Selection, inspired, 37, 42, 54,
 194, 200, 204, 254.
 Selfhood, 93, 95.
 Self-intelligence, 153, 157, 161,
 190.

- Sell=teach, impart truth, 267.
 Separation of the Kingdoms, 141,
 143, 147, 194.
 Septuagint, 31, 33, 38, 149, 170,
 176, 239.
 Sermon on the Mount, 213.
 Serpent=the sensual nature, 94,
 233, 263.
 Seven=what is holy, complete.
 Sabbath=the state of peace
 following the six days of
 Creation which corresponds
 to regeneration, 89, 171.
 Seven Churches, 252, 257.
 Sex, 6.
 Shaphan, 46.
 Shallum=those who, having the
 Word, fail to act according
 to it, 173.
 Shechem=the rudiments of faith,
 46, 144.
 Shem=internal worship, 101, 239.
 Shepherd (non-canonical N.T.),
 34.
 Sibley, *Exposition of Daniel*,
 188.
 Sidon, 217. See Tyre.
 Sight=intelligence, perception,
 240.
 Signs that follow belief, 230, 232.
 Silas, 234.
 Silver=truth; purified seven
 times=Divine Truth.
 Simeon=Providence, charity,
 obedience.
 Simulation, 157.
 Sinai=Divine Truth; Mount
 Sinai=Divine Good, 33.
 Sinaitic MS., 31, 33, 34, 230.
 Six=all the good and truth of the
 Church, 267.
 Smyth, D. Paterson, *Our Bible in
 the Making*, 204, 231.
 Sodom=the evil of self-love.
 Sole, of foot=the lowest natural
 or sensual principle.
 Solomon=truth based on love;
 the Lord as to His celestial
 kingdom, 132, 135, 144, 197.
 Son=a principle of truth, 101.
 of Man=essential truth, 219,
 227.
 of God=essential good pertaining
 to the Lord's Humanity
 when made Divine, 226.
- South=truth in light; faith
 from charity, 191, 207, 225,
 271.
 Southern Tribes, 143.
 Space=state as to nature or
 quality, with reference to the
 will, 117.
 Spengler, Dr., *The Decline of the
 West*, 8, 10, 21.
 Spiritual sense, 65, 66, 67, 79, 82,
 125, 148, 159, 167, 177, 179,
 201, 204, 207, 214, 239, 255,
 256, 271.
 Sports and variations, 7.
 Spurious, 174.
 Stars=knowledges of good and
 truth, 219, 265.
 Stick=a principle of good or
 truth, 182.
 Stone=truth, 189, 198.
 Straight=what is true.
 Street=a truth of doctrine, 264.
 Streeter, *The God Who Speaks*, 15.
 Subjective, 205, 237. See Preface.
 Subversive principles, 154.
 Summer=full state of the Church
 as to the will, or good.
Summum bonum, 142.
 Sun=love, 219, 265.
 Sun dial=reception of love, 159.
 Superstition, 231.
 Swedenborg, 12, 56, 60, 78, 116,
 125, 188, 218, 227.
 Sword=the Word, truth combatting
 evil and falsity;
 doctrine.
 two-edged, penetrating heart
 and mind, or the will and the
 understanding.
 Symbol, -ical, -ism, 170, 179, 186,
 202, 241, 255.
 Synchronism, 139.
 Synoptic, -ist, 224, 240, 245, 246,
 248.
 Syria=the Church as to know-
 ledge of truth and good, 34, 217.
- T
- Tail=scientific principle in
 ultimates; truths of the
 Word in the Letter, 266.
 Talmud; Collection of works of
 commentary and interpretation
 of the Hebrew Bible,
 50, 176.

Targum; the Aramaic translation of the Old Testament, committed to writing by the first century A.D. Those versions extant probably date from the fourth century A.D., 176.

Tatian, a disciple of Justin Martyr, c. A.D. 160; wrote the *Diatessaron* or *Book of the Four*, an attempt to combine in one consecutive life-story of our Lord the very words of the Gospels, 210.

Tel-Abib, 177.

Telos, Grk. an end, 231.

Temple=heaven and the Church, 135, 141, 172, 184, 198, 218, 252.

Temptation, 180, 211.

Ten=all, what is full, 265.
Decalogue, the Ten Words=remains, all truth preserved by the Lord's Providence; also tithes, or tenths, 147, 264.

Tendency, 216.

Terah=idolatry, 104.

Textual criticism, 163, 178, 186, 231.

Theocracy=the rule of love, 2, 128.

Theophilus, 238.

Three, third=completeness with relation to truth, 248, 271.

Throne=the reign of God in the heart or in the universal heaven.

Tile, brick=falsity.

Timbrel=affection of good and truth.

Time=state as to duration with reference to the understanding, 116.

Tin=literal sense of the Word, truth of the natural man.

Tindale, 25, 26.

Tirzah, 140.

Tischendorf, 33.

Tongue=affection of truth, doctrine, 233.

Tongues, speaking with, 13.

Torah, 39.

Touch-stone, 268, 269.

Tower=truth that defends good, or falsity that destroys, 165.
Tradition, -al, 176, 185, 187, 235, 246.

Trajan, 243, 252.

Transfiguration, 240.

Tree=man, his affection of the will and perception of the understanding; stem, branches, leaves=truths of faith.

blossoms=wisdom, fruits=things of life, love, charity, uses.

of knowledge=pride of self-intelligence, 93.

of life=the celestial principle, the Lord, love, charity.

in general=perception of the celestial man, knowledge of the spiritual man.

The two trees in the Garden of Eden=free-will given to man in spiritual things:

tree of life=perception from the Lord.

tree of knowledge of good and evil=perception from the world.

Trent, Council of, 41.

Tribes, the Twelve=all things relating to love and faith. Love to the Lord is signified by the first three, Judah, Reuben, Gad; charity to the neighbour by Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh; obedience of faith by Simeon, Levi, Issachar; the conjunction of all with the Lord by Zebulon, Joseph and Benjamin, 262, 271.

Tribulation, 192, 262.

Trinity, 221.

Trito-Isaiah, 160.

Troas, 234.

Trumpet=revelation of Divine Truth, 220, 255.

Truth, function of, 147.

Turner, 54.

Twelve=completeness with relation to good and truth, as compounded of four and three, 262, 271.

Two=completeness with relation to good, 264.

Tyre=the knowledge of truth; the possession of spiritual knowledge; the interior knowledge of spiritual things, 155, 217.

Sidon=the exterior knowledge of spiritual things, 217.

Philistia=knowledge, 154, 175.

U

Ultimates, 225.

Understanding, 6, 193, 208, 236, 240, 259.

Unity of the Godhead, 135, 212, 241, 253.

Universal Church, 179, 185.

Universality, 55, 183, 221.

Universe, 270.

Uzziah, 152.

V

Valley=what is inferior or external in the Church.

Variation, 3, 7.

Vatican MS., 32, 33, 34, 230.

Versions, 35.

Vial=doctrine of love.

Vine=the good of the intellectual principle, spiritual good.

Vision, 179, 240, 251, 258, 272.

Vulgate, 24, 26, 35, 230.

W

Wall=truth in ultimates; doctrinals of truth, 271.

daubed=falsity appearing as truth.

Watchman=one who observes the states of the Church, a Prophet.

Water=natural truth as in the Letter of the Word, 68, 248.

-pots=the Word in its Letter, 249.

Wedding guests, 249.

Weight=state as to good, 117.

West=good in obscurity, 207, 271. Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, 203, 235.

Westminster, 29.

Whale=universals of knowledge. See Dragon.

Wheat=love; wheat and tares=good and truth contrasted with evil and falsity.

Wheel=Divine intelligence; power of truth in action.

Whirlwind=Divine influx into lower things when these are in evil and falsity.

Wife=the Church as to love, 270. Will, 6, 193, 208, 236.

Wilderness=state of desolation, wanting in good and truth, 268.

Window=the intellect, truth, 99, 142.

Wine=truth, spiritual, 248.

Wing=spiritual truth, its power.

Winter=state of obscurity.

Wisdom, 240, 248.

Witness=an essential of the Church, 264.

Woman=the Church as to love for the Lord, His Law and His Kingdom, 265, 267.

Worcester, *A Life of Jesus Little Known*, 81.

Word, the Ancient, 83, 84.

Wordsworth, 14.

Worms, Reformers' publishing centre, 25.

Worship, 173, 174.

Wunsch, *The World Within the Bible*, 54, 82.

Wycliffe, 23.

X

Xerxes, 38.

Y

Yahweh, 52.

Year=a full state; years of Captivity in Babylon=full period of deprivation of good and truth.

Yorkshire, 26.

Z

Zebedee, 242.

Zebulon=the union of good and truth.

Zechariah, 192, 195.

Zedekiah, 138, 141, 169.

Zephaniah, 192, 194.

Zidon, Sidon=exterior knowledge, 217.

Zurich Bible, 25, 26.

Zwingli, 25.

